Emjay Library

DANGEROUS ISLANDS

by

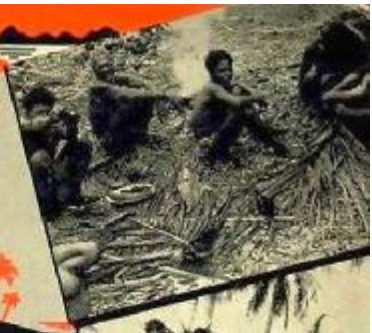
Clifford Gessler

"Among the multitude of travel-records of the South Seas this one stands out . . . a fine performance."

(Sunday Times)

CLIFFORD GESSLER

ROAD MY BODY GOES



TO ALL who long to know what life really is on a South Sea island, this book will come like a fresh breeze across a lagoon. It is the honest, vivid account of months spent among an unspoiled people who had never known white men before, written by one who has both the newspaper reporter's passion for facts and the poet's perception of beauty.

The Dangerous Islands

In the shade of tall palms stands the village well of Tepuka Maruia.

The Dangerous Islands

CLIFFORD GESSLER

MICHAEL JOSEPH LTD.
14,Henrietta St., London, W.C.2

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1937

Set and printed in Great Britain by William Brendon & Son, Ltd
at the Mayflower Press, Plymouth

This is the road my body goes:
Lost in the foaming sea.
Alas, alas, alas indeed!
Beneath the burning heat of day,
Alas indeed!

Tahitian Song

TEI KOA HOKI

Herewith thanks to persons and organizations that contributed to the experience recorded in this book: among them the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum for permission to accompany its expedition and (though the Museum is not to be held responsible for any error or for any expression of personal opinion herein) for use of its records and photographs; to the editors of *Asia Magazine, Pacific Geographic, Prairie Schooner, Five Star Weekly, Diesel Progress*, and Gernsback publications and others in which parts of this material have appeared; to Polynesian friends in remote islands, who cannot read this note of gratitude; to Kenneth P. Emory, faithful friend and companion of my sojourn there, and my shipmates aboard the *Islander* and the *Tiare Tahiti*; most of all to Margaret Gessler, whose courage and understanding persuaded me to go to the seas wherein I found the Isles of Peace.

Contents

INTRODUCTION: Where and When

I. THE DANGEROUS ISLANDS
1. At Home in the Dangerous Islands

II. FLASHBACK: HOW WE CAME to the LAND of the PUKA TREES
2. The Sampan
3. The Footprint of Heaven
4. The Road of the Plover
5. Tall Tales in Tahiti
6. Abandoned Island
7. The Shaven Sea
8. Flying Spears

III. ISLES of PEACE
9. Leaves Out of the Past
10. Ghosts
11. My Education Begins
12. Pestilence
13. Pillars of the Sacred Heart
14. "Kawkaw"
15. Harvest
16. A Chief Takes Leave of His People
17. A South Sea Kulak
18. "The Ancestors Know"
19. Old Men of Tepuka
20. Singing in the Street
21. A Tuamotuan Epic
22. Shipwrecked
23. A Home is Built
24. The Manhood Rite
25. Island Love-dance
26. The Lagoon Yields Food - and Wounds
27. I Acquire an "Ancestor"
28. A Wreath of Shells
29. Isle of Peace
30. July Fourth at Tepuka
31. Wind That Overturns the Land

32. The World Intrudes
33. Leaping-place of Souls
34. I Walk Too Near a Grave
35. The Islands Know Many Farewells

IV. NEW LANDS UNDER the HORIZON
36. "Aita Fanau"
37. Land of the Sewn Ships
38. The "Tiare Tahiti"

V. "TUAMOTU WHITE MAN"
39. "Tahiti, Pearl of the Sea"

APPENDIX I. THAT CELEBRATED LURE

APPENDIX II. FOR THOSE WHO CRAVE FACTS

APPENDIX III. NOTE on TUAMOTUAN LITERATURE

APPENDIX IV. WHENCE the POLYNESIANS?

APPENDIX V. THE FUTURE of the ISLANDS

Illustrations

- In the shade of tall palms stands the village well of Tepuka Maruia.
- The sampan *Islander*, née *Myojin Maru*, lay at dock in her American home port of Honolulu, ready for the voyage to the Dangerous Islands.
- Sampan *Islander* at Papeete, still bearing her old name *Myojin Maru*.
- The puka (Pisonia grandis) has given its name to many islands in the South Seas, among them Napuka, called by its inhabitants Tepuka Maruia: Maruia's Puka Trees. The puka was a sacred tree: its leaves, tied to the end of a carved stick, consecrated the turtle when that sacrificial reptile was slain on the sacred place.
- Tukua, the chief's daughter, when not dressed up for special occasions, wears the more comfortable house-dress of island custom: two yards of red cotton cloth wrapped around her like a towel.

- Tukua, in the cool gloom of Tiaki's house, was making string-figures as her companion chanted the legends which those intricate patterns of cord illustrate.
- At mid-week, the young men of Tepuka Maruia brought the papaya harvest from the windward side, cruising across the lagoon in canoes under a mat sail, for communal distribution on the lagoon shore.
- The island lies like a wreath upon the sea, its coral islets curving in a broken oval around it's many-colored lagoon.
- "The food of the island is good food," said Te Uru te Po as he and his family gathered around the evening meal in his coral-strewn dooryard at Tepuka Matuia.
- "The heathen time was better," said Te Urute Po, as he demonstrated the use of the digging-stick, Tepuka's only agricultural implement.

- Women were plaiting coconut fronds to make the walls of a new house.
- Temae's house was of the genuine old Tuomotuan style: strongly woven of pandanus and shaped like an inverted clothes-basket around its dark and rather close but scrupulously clean interior.
- Octopus - commonly called "squid" - when properly prepared is

the most delicious sea food of the islands. Hung from branches to dry, they give the appearance of weird foliage.

- "Temata, daughter of Maru, has made witchcraft."
- Tinaia, the wife of Toriu, shared with him the mysteries of Tuamotuan medical skill.

- Two of the ancient Tuamotuan ships, built of slabs of *tou* wood sewn together with coconut fiber or pandanus fiber, are still in use at Vahitahi, for voyages to islands far out of sight of the home port. This specimen, Tevaoroa ia Raka, is 23½ feet long. It is daid much larger ones were built in pre-discovery times.
- Great trenches scar the landscape of many Tuamotu islands. At Reao and Pukarua they are still taro fields. Thus, even on the hard coral of the atolls, man bends the stubborn substance of nature to his needs.
- The charm of Tahiti is in the "districts," away from the colonial capital. There the sun-drenched days idle easefully into nights of song, and time seems a remote and artificial thing of little reality between the timeless sea and sky.
- The visitors at Tepuka occupied one of the finest houses in the village....The children soon began to doubt that the white men would eat them.
- Wearing the ancient ceremonial dress of coconut leaves, the men and women of Vahitahi still dance the sacred figures in the food ceremony, and lure the demon Moko into a coconut shell to be buried in the sand.

LANGUAGE NOTE

SINCE this is an account of a voyage and sojourn in the South Seas, several Polynesian names inevitably occur, as well as a very few other Polynesian words - reduced to a minimum - whose meaning is clear from the context. Pronunciation is simple, if one may be permitted to ignore fine distinctions. Vowels have, roughly, the following qualities:

A as in father
E as in vein
I as in machine
O as in bone
U as double *o* in boot

Every vowel is sounded; there are no silent letters. To make it easier for the unaccustomed reader, however, I have made two departures from accepted spelling: rendering the name of my companion Kenete, to preserve its three syllables, as "Keneti," and the Polynesian nasal "g" as "ng" - pronounced always as in "singer" and never as in "finger."

Consonants, with this exception, are sounded as in English.

Further elaboration, in the interest of complete accuracy, would interest only students of language, known in these pages as Ua, and other publications of the Bishop Museums.

Where and When

IT IS ALREADY becoming difficult for me to believe that such a place as Tepuka Maruia really exists. Just as from that island the complex and somewhat feverish world we know recedes and becomes unreal, so now, in the midst of this world again, Tepuka in tum fades into unreality, even as from the deck of a departing schooner its red-rimmed shores and green and golden palms sink beneath the horizon of the Pacific.

Yet I know that unless in the last few months some convulsion of nature has hurled it back into the surrounding depths, that broken ring of coral islets still encloses that lagoon dot ted with mounds of shells, and its two hundred brown and sturdy inhabitants are going about their simple business of obtaining the day's food from sea and land, very much as if no other world existed but their own.

In that part of the South Sea eastward of Tahiti, flung across it in a long ragged line like a band of nebulae across the sky, stretching from northwest to southeast for more than nine hundred miles, lie the eighty or more low coral islands known officially as the Tuamotu, to their inhabitants as Paumotu or Poumotu, and to the navigators who explored these seas as the Dangerous Islands.

Farthest north of these, and eight degrees farther east than Tahiti, or about midway of the east and west length of the archipelago, are two atolls close together but separated rather widely from others of the chain. To the nautically minded, they are about fourteen degrees south of the equator and one hundred and forty-one west of Greenwich and more than a hundred miles from that other island of the Tuamotu that is the nearest land.

The official name of the larger of the two islands, Napuka, is, its people say, a foreign name, having no meaning in their language. Perhaps it is a mistaken collectivization for "Pakarua," a name sometimes applied to these, as to other pairs of islands, as "the two lands of the puka trees."

Now they are a district of that scattered empire known as Les Établissements Francais de l'Océanie, and the local chief bears the title of Président du Conseil de District de Napuka. No Frenchman lives there; the administration of the Tua motu, at Fakarava, is many days' sailing over dangerous seas; the colonial government of French Oceania, at Papeete, is farther still, and life goes on, affected a little by missionary activity and the copra trade, but in most of its essentials still the life of a primitive Polynesian people, saved by poverty from the fate that has overtaken their kindred in many isles of the Tuamotu.

Throughout the days of sail, the Tuamotu were avoided. It was for good reason that the early navigators called them the Dangerous Islands. Low lying, visible for only a few miles at sea; encircled with reefs off which deep water often affords no secure anchorage; beset with rapid currents that change without warning; imperfectly charted, and subject to violent hurricanes, they are still a death-trap for ships. Only the copra trade and pearl fishing swung them into the routes of the schooners that ply in and out of Papeete. The temporary prosperity that these things brought has been the ruin of many of those islands. But Tepuka and Tepoto have comparatively little copra and few if any pearls; they are relatively remote, and the prevailing winds make them difficult to reach. They are sighted occasionally from French steam ships passing between the Panama Canal and Tahiti on the line that runs from France to New Caledonia. Once in three months or so, a schooner calls for a few hours to pick up the small quantity of copra which is their sole article of export.

They are small islands, unimportant to a world whose main concern is commercial and industrial profit. Tepuka is about four and a half miles long and two miles wide. The mean width of the land partly enclosing the lagoon is perhaps a quarter of a mile. Tepoto, though it is a solid island, all of one piece, its interior lagoon having dried up, is smaller. But they suffice. They have been, and can be again, independent of the rest of the world. Even today, many of the changes have been but surface matters. Essentially, much of the old life still remains.

They are happy in that coral land. There are song and laughter in their streets, and dancing in the clean-swept door yards at night. The young folk dance beneath the moon, and make love afterward on the mats under the coconut trees, and there is none to censure them or think of shame. There are many children at Tepuka and Tepoto - sturdy, laughing, lustrous-eyed children, who swim in the warm lagoon and catch fish with their quick hands in the shallows, and play merry games up and down the sanded streets. The world out side may be shattered with economic distress, may face starvation in lands that produce such plenty as the Tuamotuan cannot even imagine. But Tepuka and Tepoto know nothing of these things. In a country free from the stress and burden of our complex and top heavy civilization, its profit motive geared down to five dollars a year - in such a land there can be no "depression."

It is questionable whether the life of Tepuka would satisfy, permanently, a person of Western race and upbringing. But the first influence of such an environment upon a stranger fresh from the turmoil of American civilization is amazing. Instead of boredom with the supposed monotony of existence in a restricted sphere, one feels only a deep sense of peace. It is as if a burden had been lifted; as if one had been viewing the world through lenses that distorted one's vision, and now saw clearly for the first time.

It was there that I went, in the course of an expedition from the Bernice P.

Bishop Museum of Honolulu, and in company with Kenneth P. Emory, ethnologist of the museum staff - known in these pages by his island name "Keneti."

I hope no reader will acquire from these pages mistaken notions of an easeful and idyllic life among our Tuamotuan friends as being available to everybody. In the experience herein recorded I was singularly fortunate in having the aid of the facilities of a great American research institution and of a companion who already had an entree into the confidence of the people, and I entered that experience with a background of thirteen years' residence in Hawaii and some accompanying acquaintance with Polynesian language and customs. Visitors not so equipped would find life in the Tuamotu more difficult.

These are my friends, the people of that land; in whose houses we lived, whose simple food we ate and on whose mats we slept; whose ancient chants we learned in the hours after midnight by the dim light in the houses woven of leaves, and whose dances we danced with them on the sea-worn pebbles under the moon; in whose language I learned to speak, if but haltingly, and, in that language, dream.

I tell of them and of their life, and of our life among them, honestly, as befits an honest people, and simply, as they would have it told.

I

The Dangerous Islands

1. At Home in the Dangerous Islands

TEPUIA MARUIA lies like a wreath upon the sea. Its coral islets curve in a broken oval around its variously colored lagoon; above them its thousands of coconut palms write an unintelligible fantastic message in the sky.

It was but the outer rim of the wreath that we saw that morning, a speck of precarious bloom in the vast unfrequented meadows of the sea. It was at first only a low dark line against the dawn - hardly more than the serrated crest of a wave. One often sights a low island first at dawn. The ship lies off at a safe distance overnight, and in the morning approaches cautiously the dangerous shore. At some islands Anaa, for instance, in the western Tuamotu, and at Tapuaerangi in the Line Isles - one sees a green glow in the sky long before the land itself becomes visible. These are atolls with great shallow lagoons, whose green or yellow reflection on the clouds identifies them from afar. The lagoon of Tepuka is deep, and lights no warning signal in the sky.

Gradually the low land lifted into view: a curve of reef lightly feathered with the tips of palms. It solidified and took shape: the palms thrust higher, a white coral church. distinguishing landmark for miles at sea, rising out of the yellow and green of tumbled fronds.

The island was a fresh and beautiful sight as we approached: its outer reef, the color of weathered red brick, slanting sharply into deep blue and green water, and spreading landward in an expanse of flat border-reef with tide pools standing in its crevices and depressions. Behind it rose the gray-white, jagged, raised slabs of old broken beaches; farther inland, a broad white glare of sand blindingly brilliant in the tropic light, till our eyes rested with relief on the coco nut trees that waved green and tawny fronds as far as sight could reach.

Fishermen in tiny dugout canoes were plying their lines offshore. Younger men, stripped to loincloths, their powerful bodies gleaming darkly in the water, were diving with spears near the reef. The lean, clean, silent black dogs of the chief's household loped up and down the coral flats, hunting their sea-food in the morning tide.

A crowd had gathered at the landing place to view the in frequent arrival of a ship. Most of them were children, in faded red loincloths or in tiny strips of old flour-sacking, the smaller ones naked, their brown bodies standing out darkly against the white of sand. A few of their elders stood about: men in blue dungarees cut off at the knee, and tattered white singlets; women in bright or faded knee-length print dresses, or in pareu that made vivid splashes of red under the morning sun. A huge French flag was run up on a pole

planted in the beach sand, in honor of our arrival.

They watched us curiously as we anchored in the beautiful water. Canoes drew alongside, paddled swiftly by brown, mustached Tuamotuans in tall hats. Children swam out, hold ing chickens under one arm. One lad carried a crude ukulele fashioned from a sardine tin. A small, wiry Polynesian of the Caucasian type of features, with formidable black mustaches, came aboard. By his blue cap, trimmed with red braid, the symbol of French colonial authority in these outlying districts of Oceania (and worn only on state occasions), we knew him for the island equivalent of chief of police.

He examined the ship's papers-an empty formality, since he could neither read nor speak French or English - and signaled with his arms for drinking-coconuts to be brought to the ship.

This official went ashore with the mail for the island - a single sack containing, as we saw later, nothing but one copy of an ecclesiastical publication in the Tahitian language - and returned with the chief, a handsome, stalwart man, with even more impressive mustaches. The chief wore once-white trousers with blue stripes, tucked up around the knees for wading in and out of canoes, the remains of a white under shirt, and a soiled sun-helmet. Maono Maetiu Arai, president of the council of the district, and Tehau, his gendarme, were dressed up for the occasion.

Landing at low islands usually is accomplished in whale boats, and is an uncertain process. Trusting rather to the seamanship of the natives and the seaworthiness of their canoes, Keneti and I accepted Maono's invitation to accompany him ashore. We clambered down into the narrow canoe balancing our typewriters precariously on our knees as the paddlers drove the tiny craft toward the reef. Waves spilled over the low sides with every stroke; a boy bailed them out with a coconut shell. The paddlers watched their chance; the canoe rose on an incoming wave and hung poised; they drove it skillfully into the shallow depression in the reef which is the "harbor."

We waded through the shallows on the smooth pink coral and clambered over the piled-up slabs of uprooted beach. Other canoes followed with our luggage and supplies. Islanders stood regarding us curiously, some eagerly turning over the soaked pages of old magazines which spilled from a broken bundle on the rock.

The chief, quite democratically picking up a suitcase in either hand, led us down a broad street, laid out as straight as with a ruler, curbed with blocks of coral and neatly sanded, between thatched palm-leaf houses, irregularly spaced, to which little paths wound over the coral, beneath the leaning palms.

Half a dozen young men followed us with the remainder of our belongings, as Maono showed us into the house that had been set aside for - contrary to what one reads of the South Seas - a sizable consideration in Banque d'Indo-Chine notes.

"There are not really enough houses in the village," he explained. "The people have increased. But I have arranged with Kararo to let you stay in this

one. His son Tangihia will move into the house next door, with Kararo's family."

It was a fine house, for these parts: oblong, with walls stoutly woven of coconut leaves; a high roof of the stronger pandanus, heavily thatched with leaves of one or both trees; the whole building set nearly a yard from the ground, out of reach of pigs, on a foundation of large blocks of coral, filled in with a floor of small white pebbles upon which had been laid a large mat.

Two irregular stone steps led up to an entrance at the seaward end. Another entrance, opposite, and one on the side of the house toward the street, were without such approaches. All these openings were fitted with rude doors nailed together from bits of boxes and hung on leather lunges. There were no windows, but the woven sides admitted the breeze.

A few odds and ends lay about the single room: a chest in one corner, an empty box and some bottles in another; coils of cured pandanus leaf hung from nails driven into the frame of poles.

The doorways filled with curious villagers as we moved in. An elderly man in a red waistcloth, with walrus mustaches, graying hair, and a face that suggested strongly the features of a certain prominent American financier and former secretary of the treasury, appeared, smelling slightly of fish.

"I am Kararo. You are welcome in my house."

This was our landlord, a capitalist in his way and, as we had already discovered, the most acquisitive and inquisitive resident of the community.

He produced a key and pointed out, with evident pride, an ancient and rusted padlock of French construction which secured the street door. The other doors could be fastened from the inside, one with a loop of wire and the other with a wooden latch, which fell off at the slightest pressure.

"This," the owner informed us, "is the only house on the island that can be locked up."

"You must," he stipulated, "save your garbage for my pigs. If you drive any nails in the walls, you must leave them there and not take them with you when you go. And save for me all your tin cans."

Tins with removable tight covers are valuable, in the Tuamotu, as containers, but it was a long time before we found out why he wanted the ordinary small cans, useless for that purpose and jagged with the cut of the opener. Weeks afterward, it came out.

"He takes them to his land at the other end of the island," his wife Tangia revealed, when she came to know us better, "and buries them around the roots of his coconut trees. He believes the iron, as it rusts away, will give strength to the trees."

Young men moved in our supplies and remained to stare. Others crowded into the room and blocked the doorways. They were a healthy-looking lot, mostly of medium stature, but strongly built; with smooth skins of varying degrees of brown, luxuriant dark or reddish hair, and white, even teeth. The number of children was impressive - beautiful, brown sturdy children, whose

great dark eyes followed our every movement, picking out this or that article of wonderment as it was unpacked.

"There, look at that!" they whispered.

Teuri, the secondary chief, came to help. He was a stocky, curly-haired chap, whose appearance was somewhat marred by salt-water sores on his legs, which he kept stamping alternately to shake off the flies. Teuri, we learned, was a naturalized citizen of Tepuka, a native of the Society Islands, who had come to the atoll as a sailor, formed an association with a Tepuka girl, and remained, to enjoy a certain prestige because of his smattering of knowledge of foreign ways.

"My father," he revealed, "was killed in the fighting on Raiatea" - in the last century, before the islands had been pacified as now.

"Any foreigner," he explained, "can become a member of the community after he has been here six months. After that time, he has to do his share of the community work, but he cannot acquire land, since all the land is held by the families who are already here."

The latter prohibition is, however, no hardship; one merely exercises, as does Teuri, the land rights of one's native wife.

Our captain meanwhile was bargaining with the villagers for supplies, acquiring several ducks and chickens and a quantity of coconuts in consideration of tobacco and empty oil tins. A group of men were trying to sell him a pig.

"I don't want a whole pig," he was protesting. "It would spoil before we could eat it."

"That is no difficulty," responded one of the men. "Invite us aboard to help eat it!"

Among the visitors in our doorways we noticed an unusually blond little girl who had attracted our attention even before our landing.

"Who is she?"

Old one-eyed Herako, who had just rescued a roll of excelsior from the rubbish and was braiding it into a garland for her hat, replied:

"She is Marnia, the daughter of Ruruhau and Teroro-tu-iti, who have gone to Fakahina. She lives in the house of her grandfather, Kararo."

"We had thought, from her appearance, that she might be a white man's daughter."

"She is indeed white of skin, and her hair is very blond, but Maruia's parents are known to us all, and the genealogy of her family has been kept for thirty-five generations."

"Are there any children of white blood in the island?"

"There are none. No white men have lived on the island, save the missionary who was here, who kept the rule of his priesthood, and took no woman."

"It is a strange custom," commented Rangina, the hen pecked husband of the community, who was standing by, "but doubtless it saves him much

trouble."

"Do not white men come sometimes in the ships?"

"Sometimes they do. But the schooners stop here for only a few hours to load copra. They don't stay overnight."

"You will see many blonds among our people," said Maono the chief. "It has been so from the beginning.

"Little Marnia is named for the First Ancestor who came from Mahina-te-tahora, which is now called Pukapuka, and who was chiefess of that island and this and Tepoto. It is because of her that the land is called Tepuka Maruia."

"And what was the ancestry of that Maruia?"

"She was 'born of the Sea that Moans and of the Bones of Chiefs.' She was one of the Four Ancestors. One came from Tahiti and one from Nukuhiva, and one from a land unknown to us. But from the earliest times there have been blonds among our people."

Looking about among those gathered in the house, I could distinguish here and there traces of the Caucasian features and reddish-brown hair that Wallis observed at his discovery of Tahiti, as did the sixteenth-century Spaniards in the Marquesas, and which are dispersed widely among the Polynesian people. Here was a man East Indian in appearance; here one who, had he been clad in blanket and feathers might have passed for an American aborigine; here the rounded comfortable outlines of the Tahitian and Hawaiian; here the tilted eyelids of the Mongol; a suggestion of the Malay even a hint of the curly-haired, dark and wide-nosed Melanesian. The Polynesians, in their wanderings, have touched many lands since, as is surmised, the first tribe of them was crowded out of southern Asia by famine or flood or invasion and moved in a scattered migratory horde into the chains of islands that sparsely dot the Pacific. Wave after wave they came; till one land after another became crowded, and the younger and more adventurous or those defeated in war moved on, led by their priests whose visions told of lands beyond the horizon.

How many fleets were lost, none can know. Yet, in dugout canoes, or in boats sewn together of planks, by paddle and by sail they voyaged throughout the Pacific - the chants of their oarsmen ringing thinly and bravely down the wind.

To Hawaii in the north, New Zealand in the south; to Samoa and Tonga; to the Austral Isles and Rapa and Mangareva, they spread, leaving scattered groups in their wake. Ongtong-Java and Rennell, in the midst of the Melanesia lands, bear witness. There are apparent traces of them among the Micronesians; in the far Philippines the Malaysian tribe tell stories of Maui, the Polynesian hero whose name is known in all the Maori lands. The mutineers of the *Bounty*, landing at remote Pitcairn, found the temple-stones of the Polynesians and the images of their gods. Deserted Malden, unfertile and inhospitable land of sand and guano, bears the ruins of their burial places. The colossal sculptures of Easter Island record the aspirations of that far

scattered race. It has been surmised that the Incas knew them and traded with them the sweet potato, which is still known throughout the South Pacific by its Peruvian name. Daring imaginations have suggested that perhaps the Incas themselves were Polynesians.

And here, on one of the most remote atolls of the Tuamotu, were these hauntingly Caucasian faces, this red-gold hair, mingled with the high cheek bones that spoke of Asia, the dark curls of Melanesia, and the lineaments of who knows what vanished races that may have occupied these far islets before the conquerors came.

Such were my thoughts as I sat in that house of leaves, listening to the conversation, which in itself betrayed mixed linguistic origins - words from the old Polynesian, recalling memories of days like and unlike this in Hawaii; the worn syllables of Tahitian, and strange dark words from that imperfectly explained tongue that bears the name among them of "the root speech."

Dismissing the staring visitors, with the help of Teuri, we closed the rude doors and walked out to explore. As we passed through the village, I was surprised by the cleanness of its streets. They are far broader than is demanded by any traffic they have to carry, in a land whose people go afoot. Their rigid straightness is probably a foreign notion; they look out of place, until one becomes accustomed to them, in a country whose natural outlines are curves.

"Are the streets of Tahiti as fine as those of Tepuka?" a resident asked.

Evidently the spirit of "civic pride" had penetrated to the Tuamotu.

Along the four highways the houses - built, like the one we occupied, of coconut leaves, or in the older Tuamotuan manner of pandanus - are arranged in pleasing irregularity, according to the old system of land rights which took no account of straight lines. Around them lies the broken coral which is the soil of this part of the island since a hurricane some years ago washed away most of the sand. The sand on the streets and in some of the dooryards had been trans ported from the beach; we were to see the children hauling it, by ropes of coconut sheath, in turtle shells.

A group of women and children were gathered around the well - for Tepuka draws its water from the ground unlike many of the Tuamotu lands, where rain is caught from roofs. The roofs of Tepuka are of thatch.

They were drawing water from the shallow pool at the bottom of the square stone enclosure, with small containers lowered by a cord. Some had the old-fashioned dipper of coconut shell; others a narrow rectangular tin with the top cut off. From this they poured into larger containers - here and there a bucket, more often a five-gallon oil tin, for which a chicken had been traded to some ship. They lingered gossip, then shouldered the carrying-stick, balancing the buckets suspended from its two ends, and started home. Now and then one of the women would stop to chat with a neighbor, without setting down her load.

As we passed through the streets, people everywhere greeted us, holding

out the hand in what they conceived be the white man's fashion and saying pleasantly, as in Tahiti "Let there be life!" Everywhere were children - the healthiest, happiest children I had seen in the South Seas - skipping rope with strands of twisted coconut-leaf sheath, playing throwing and running game with a ball woven of coconut leaves and weighted with pebbles; here two boys were going toward the lagoon with toy boats ingeniously fashioned of coconuts. We followed them.

There are other lagoons like it, but this was the first of it kind I had known-a long oval of vari-colored water, shading from light green and almost yellow over sand in the shallow. to blues and purples in deeper water or over coral, and dotted with what appeared to be tiny islets, low and rounded, gleam ing bone-white under the sun. The effect of these white islets, set in the glow of color of the water, and of looking past them to the distant shores, feathery with coconut fronds, and the white plumes of surf curling over the shallow passes between the segments of the outer ring of land, was that of a fantastic landscape, as if a glimpse of another planet.

The coconut trees come down to the end of the street and a little beyond. A beach of fine sand and sediment, softer than that of the outer shore, slopes to a tide-flat of similar material, partly submerged. Beyond it, the flashing shallows stretch to where they merge with the deeper lagoon, mottled with coral.

Clad only in shorts as we were, we waded out, stepping carefully to avoid the sharp-edged tridacna shells half buried in the sand, dived where the bottom slanted off steeply, and swam toward the nearest "islet."

The water was warm, with streaks of cold. Below could be distinguished the fantastic branched and mushroom shapes of submarine forest-the coral that had built the atoll, and the strange cold flowers of the sea. As we approached the white islet, its composition, had we not already known it, became apparent - a pile of old tridacna shells, hurled on the shallows in the course of centuries by the people of Tepuka as they opened the clam-like bivalve and ate it on the spot or carried the meat home in baskets.

Setting feet carefully on the ridged backs of shells that lay thickly in the shallow, we climbed up on the rounded heap. All around the shores and far out into the lagoon, these shell mounds lay, the clean refuse of centuries, a monument to hunger. Far off to the east, the bent forms of women were outlined against the glare of light that beat upon the lagoon as they gathered these shellfish and threw the shells on the heap, building new islets. Beyond them, a canoe skimmed the surface, running under a mat sail.

Children playing in the shallows watched us with interest as we swam. It was the first time they had seen the "Hawaiian crawl."

"Swift!" they marveled.

They dog-paddled at a little distance; they were shy, in those first days. As we walked back toward the houses, a tiny blond-haired boy ran, screaming, to hide. Probably we were the first white men he had seen. We asked a woman

who was standing by the well, "Why is the child frightened?"

She laughed. "The older children tell the younger ones that the white men eat children."

The house was full of people that afternoon some trying to sell relics such as shell adzes and scrapers, shell or bone fishhooks, a spade of turtle bone, or such modern and useful works as baskets of pandanus or coconut leaf; or to trade them for covered tins.

Among these relics appeared one rare treasure - a low four legged stool, roughly hewn of wood - the ancient ceremonial seat of a chief. A murmuring arose: this was community property, some said, and the man who brought it to us had no right to sell it. Keneti spoke briefly:

"We don't want to buy it, or deprive you of it. We wish only to preserve it for you. Has it not been forgotten a neglected? It was dragged out of a rubbish-heap. See - one leg already has been broken off. In a few more years here, it would go to pieces. Let us take it to the great house in Hawaii where such things are kept, and it will be safe."

"The white man is right," said the chief. "Let him have it. It is true that the old things now are neglected here. Let him keep it for us in that great house in his country, and perhaps in future times our descendants will turn again to the ancient ways, and will go there to see this treasure of our people's past."

Most of our visitors, however, came to gaze. Teuri again rescued us.

"Go, all of you! The white men are going to eat."

Apparently it is a breach of etiquette in Tepuka to watch others at mealtime. Kararo lingered to remind us again that we had promised him the used tins and garbage. Teuri picked up an orange, the last of a net of them that we had brought from Tahiti, and ate it, carefully preserving the skin. This he fastened to his hat, in the shape of a star-like ornament; then went out, wearing it with visible pride. Oranges do not grow on the low islands. Not only was the orange skin an unusual decoration, but it announced to all the people that he, Teuri the son of Teave, had eaten an orange!

Evening nestled down over Tepula; there was singing in the street. We sat on the low wall in front of Teuri's house to watch and listen. A tall slender girl stood in the center, her hair piled on her head and fastened with a comb, from which a great reddish tuft arose like the plume of some strange bird. She laid a mouth-organ to her lips, and played three chords over and over in a quick, strong rhythm. A young man kept time by blowing across the mouth of a bottle, producing a hollow sound not unlike that of the conch shell which undoubtedly was used for that purpose in the days before bottles became available. It is a lot of trouble to bore a hole in the end of a conch shell.

Around the musicians, the dancers grouped in pairs, forming a circle, and stepped around them: four half-running strides, in a segment of the circle; then the girl, in the lead, turned and faced her partner, shaking her hips as in the Hawaiian hula, but more rapidly, while he responded ad lib. It was a vigorous dance, and they seldom kept at it long at a time. It would end

abruptly, with some excited swain bending his knees, shaking them inward and outward rapidly and crouching gradually, his partner meanwhile descending opposite him, until one or the other was unable to get down any lower and still keep balance - when one would run away, laughing.

Hour after hour, however, in these short segments, the dance went on.

"They dance sometimes half the night," said Teuri, "and make love the rest of the night, on the mats under the coconut trees."

"What do their parents think of that?"

"The parents do not concern themselves about it. Why should they? If they think of it at all, they are pleased. With out love in youth, the young men and the young women would not develop normally. Is not the custom the same in the white man's country?"

We have our tabus, Teuri, many of them. You also have tabus. But our tabus differ from yours."

Teuri wanted to know all about our customs and we talked late. At length, yawning frankly, for he had been since daybreak, he rose to go.

"The ways of the white man indeed are strange," he said.

The dancing and singing died away, as couple after couple slipped off to the houses or to their mats under the trees. The breeze from the lagoon blew cool and soothingly through the woven walls of the house. I fell asleep to the low clashing of palm fronds and the distant thrumming of surf on coral.

II

Flashback: How We Came to the Land of the Puka Trees

2. The Sampan

THE TELEPHONE BELL stabbed into the confused shuffle of noises of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* news room.

"This is Bill Anderson - captain of the *Islander*. Do you want to go with me to the South Seas?"

I couldn't afford to leave my job that long. But after working as telegraph editor by day and literary and arts editor by night for more than ten years under increasingly difficult conditions, I needed a rest.

"It's your chance," Margaret advised. "Take it."

I called back Captain Anderson.

"Save a bunk for me, Captain Bill. I'll go."

Bill's ninety-foot fishing sampan *Islander*, still bearing her original name *Myojin Maru*, lay in drydock, undergoing alterations to accommodate a long-planned expedition from the Bishop Museum.

"*Ia ora na!*" he greeted me in anticipatory Tahitian, as I walked up the swaying plank. "How do you like my ship?"

A cabin had been built, amidships, with a mess table down the center and two tiers of bunks along the sid for the scientists. In this cabin, eleven by fourteen feet, from four to six of them were to eat, sleep and, with additional volunteer helpers from the crew, work often sixteen to eighteen hours a day over a period of almost seven months, in which they covered more than nine thousand miles of the South Pacific.

Captain Anderson had a room of his own, forward, with a spare bunk for the mate; a galley had been installed between this and the after cabin, and a drying-house for botanical specimens had been attached, aft, like a large wart on the starboard-after corner of the cabin. The ship looked otherwise much like any other large sampan - long, relatively narrow, with a high sharp bow from which the sides curved away steeply to a flattened shallow **V** of bottom and a square low stern. A mast was being rigged for wireless communication and the two hundred horsepower Diesel was making a great racket as it was being tuned up in the hot smelly engine room below.

"You can have your choice of these bunks," said Bill, pointing down the hatch into the fo'c'sle. There were six, built into the wedge-shaped peak of the bow, among massive timbers, coils of rope, and bundles of canvas. From the engine room, fumes of burning oil sifted dustily into the narrow space where scarcely more than one man at a time could stand between the wooden bunks.

"That boat will never get farther than Molokai. . . . It will turn over when a sea hits it. . . . It won't stay afloat in a blow .... "

So the wiseacres of Honolulu, including not a few experienced haunters of the waterfront, predicted as they viewed the oddly remodeled craft.

"A sampan isn't built to carry all that superstructure," they pointed out. "You'll be lucky if any of you get home alive."

"I'll back my ship, for seaworthiness and comfort," Bill insisted, "against any boat of her size in the world."

Some formalities remained: permission from the Bishop Museum; "leave of absence" from the *Star-Bulletin*; defrayment of my share of Bill's expenses; registration as, like the scientists, a member of the crew. Delays clutched at us to the last. The two thousand or more people who assembled that Sunday afternoon in mid-April to see us off were worn out with waiting while a new crystal was ground for the wireless set and the mate adjusted some legal difficulty. Looking at the splintered wharf thronged with bon-voyagers, it seemed as if half Honolulu were there. They melted away before the afternoon was over; but a sizable handful remained: museum folk, divided between envy of our voyaging to far islands and self-congratulation that they were to escape its hardships; wives and relatives and sweethearts, anxious at heart but bravely laughing to the world; even some of the merely curious lingered to the last.

A luxurious yacht, sleek and black of hull, shining white of sail, departed just ahead of us from the adjoining pier.

"I wish you were going on *that* boat," murmured plaintively the wife of Dr. Cooke, leader of our expedition.

"*I* don't," replied that forthright man of science. "Because that boat can't go anywhere that I want to go."

Men swarmed over her yards, shaking out the great sails. A band played. Our low-lying, uncleansable fishing-boat looked very small and shabby beside that floating palace. But not a man aboard envied her. We were bound for ports where she would never venture.

The *Islander* quivered with the throb of her powerful engine. Last good-bys were said over again, a little wearily; and there were those who clung, for more than half of our leavetakers scarcely expected us to return.

Alec, Captain Bill's brother, danced an island step on the roof of the pilot house, chanting a Tahitian song, as the sampan slid swiftly out of Honolulu harbor, bound south with a following sea.

"Turn, turn the turtle .." the words blew away down the wind, as the misty mountains of Oahu faded in the gathering dusk. For more than half a year this little craft and the coral or lava earth of far, strange islands were to be our home. The northern summer would be gone and the sun turned again before our feet would retread the ruddy volcanic soil of that justly celebrated integral part of the United States.

Captain Bill looked up from the "heel into the descending night, where a bird flapped wearily across our bow.

There's a good sight: a booby going home .... That's how we used to find

Fanning Island, and Washington Island, after dark - follow the booby birds in from their fishing."

"It's an old Polynesian method," confirmed Emory the ethnologist. "Bruce Cartwright thinks the Polynesians reached Hawaii from Tahiti by following the golden plover. It's a jump of more than 2,400 miles, with few bits of land between, and he argues that's the only way they could have known there was land here - from the birds.

"He may be right; the Tuamotuans even today know where they are at sea by the flight of the birds, and by the currents, and the color of the sea. They even know by the winds, for every wind has a name."

And so the conversation ran, on our predecessors in this voyaging. Our own ship was little if any larger than the double outrigger dugout canoes or plank-sewn masted *pahi* in which those adventurous seamen, whose path we were retracing, sailed the wide empty spaces of the Pacific.

We were an oddly enough assorted ship's company: men of at least three racial ancestries, and of widely varying back grounds, but bound together by a common interest, from our different points of view, in the islands south that were linked by so many elusive and puzzling strands with the islands we were leaving.

The scientists: senior of all, and leader of the expedition, Dr. C. Montague Cooke Jr., whose modesty will deprecate being mentioned at all; an heir to one of the greater fortunes of Hawaii, whose lifetime of research had made him one of the world's foremost in his field - that of malacology, or the study of living land-shells, known to the layman as "snails." He was the core and soul of the expedition; he had planned it before some of us were born; he had created it by his urge to find what was hidden in those far islands of southeastern Polynesia, before the things to be found were gone. Kindly and genial, with a jest to meet every hardship and a solution for every problem, he kept the spirits of his little company toned and in harmony through those sometimes weary months. We used to say, meaning no disrespect, that Dr. Cooke was the "toughest" of us all. He apparently thrived on hardship. If it sometimes bore heavily on his years, he never let us guess it. A stout heart, and a great one, with the quality of leadership that inspires loyalty and affection - and withal as democratic as any occupant of the fo'c'sle, though none but Sam Wight, who, being his nephew, called him "Monty," ever referred to him otherwise than as "Dr. Cooke."

Donald Anderson, his assistant, cheerful and full of help and stories. Harold St. John, botanist, and perhaps the only Doctor of Science ever written down on a ship's papers as bos'n's mate. Raymond Fosberg, St. John's assistant, tall and handsome and quiet, who had more hard luck than any of us and met it with a smile. Kenneth P. Emory, ethnologist, who had been before us to the islands where we were going, who spoke their language and knew more about them than any other of our company. In the months that followed, we were to know him by the name he bore with affection in a host of islands:

"Keneti."

The sailors proper: Captain Anderson, blond Viking of the equatorial Pacific; grandson of a Scottish pioneer and a Manihiki princess with the blood of Norse and Polynesian sea rovers in his veins. Square-hewn and quiet-spoken, quick-moving and of superb mental and physical co-ordination, he would have stood out among any crowd as one accustomed to command. Bill Anderson combined scientific navigation with the Polynesian instinct for the sea; we used to say he could smell an island farther than most navigators could reckon it.

Alec, his brother, who had sailed the lagoons of equatorial atolls with him in their boyhood, staying out weeks at a time. He had a vast repertoire of Tahitian dances and songs from his service with Father Rougier in the copra groves of Christ mas Island, and Gilbertese from his direction of laborers at Fanning.

Yoshio Kondo, a young veteran of the fishing boats, as much at home on a sampan as ashore. Lean and hard, accustomed to the harsh life of a deep-sea fisherman, he seemed naturally designed for the job of nursing the Diesel engine, which he shared with Enos Lyons, usually addressed as "Eoka," but by Dr. Cooke as "Doctor" Lyons, the big Hawaiian sailor. Enoka, one of the handiest and most resourceful seamen it has been my privilege to encounter, was the joy of the party with his kindly humor. Long hours at the wheel, when the volunteer "A.B.'s" were unable to report for duty, and more hours of tinkering with parts in the hot, smelly engine room, never wore down Enoka's unfailing good temper. And, like most Hawaiians, he played the guitar and sang.

Sam Wight, member of an old Hawaii family, shared Captain Bill's cabin and practiced navigation in a persistent attempt to make his calculations square with those of Bill. Sam, a volunteer mate, functioned as steward, and few could make a meager sheaf of paper francs go as far in island marketplaces as he.

Ernest, the cook, one must regard in retrospect with mixed feelings. He was a late acquisition, the cook earlier engaged having failed to report. When we were well out of port, we discovered that he had never cooked, or been at sea, before. It was harder for Ernest than for us. A landsman, irrevocably planted on the deck of a plunging sampan, with the inevitable consequences to his interior mechanism, he had to struggle with a sometimes balky stove in a galley that bucked under his feet like a wild pony. Sometimes waves crashed through, drowning his fire and sending his pots and pans, with their contents, sloshing and banging into the scuppers. His bewilderment, those first days, was pathetic. But he didn't complain. Meeting our frank comments with a gentle smile, he set to work to learn his job, in the face of disheartening difficulties, and often with appalling results. We became fond of Ernest. His cooking was nearly always a surprise, and sometimes it was good. He was always ready to help with anybody else's job. We had no harder worker

aboard, though his efforts often were misdirected.

Two of us were neither scientists nor sailors, though we were down on the ship's papers as "A.B.'s." The other was Alexander MacDonald, a young newspaperman. A rugged New England lad, he had the sea in his blood and the call of far islands in his heart.

In Tahiti there awaited us Elwood Zimmerman, a young entomologist, and J. Frank Stimson, an ethnologist whose quarter century of study of Polynesian dialects had given him a wider knowledge of island speech - scientifically, at least than was possessed by the natives themselves, and the name, on islands high and low, of "Ua." Joining us there later would be Dr. Peter Buck, brilliant ethnologist descended from a line of Maori chiefs from whom he derives the distinguished name Te Rangi Hiroa - the Sky Lit by Long Rays of the Sun.

With us was Bubbles, Captain Bill's dog. Bubbles had trotted down the plank at Honolulu and adopted the ship. An unknown mixture of breeds, among which we could identify tentatively Scotty and Hawaiian poi-dog, with a suspicion of poodle, had given her a barrel-like longish body covered with white curly hair, slung low within the supports of absurdly short legs. "A dachshund gone wrong," Mac called her, and Sam, who nevertheless was fond of the wistful-looking creature, nominated her "the dumbest dog in the Pacific."

This, then, was the population of our little world afloat. Diverse as we were, and sharing a life that had inevitably its daily privations, in the cramped quarters of the sampan, a spirit of comradeship prevailed. To the last, I never heard a really harsh word among our company. Even our aspersions on Ernest's efforts in the galley were softened with good natured grins. And his rare successes were hailed with genuine outbursts of praise.

There was much good-humored raillery; Dr. Cooke and Sam in particular carried on an affectionate and amusing perpetual wrangle. A group of men isolated from the rest of the world tend to drop with conscious pleasure the polite conventions of that world, and our daily conversation was, perhaps appropriately enough, more reminiscent of piratical decks and shoreside taverns than of the university lecture rooms and scientific laboratories from which half of our party came.

We had been at sea an hour or two when Ernest called us into the cabin for our first supper of the voyage. Metal plates and cups were skidding as the *Islander* pitched in the swell. Ernest, with a frightened look, hurled a handful of hard tan colored ship's biscuit on the table, and fled, to reappear later with a dark warm liquid which he decanted into cups.

"Coffee," Sam pronounced it. "Tea," Mac declared. "You're both wrong; it's cocoa," insisted Dr. Cooke.

And that was all. It seemed an inadequate meal for supposed hearty sailormen, but nobody said anything about it. I wanted to inquire whether there wasn't another course, but reflected that perhaps this was the customary

supper on voyages of this kind. Most of the scientists, with the exception of that stout heart, Dr. Cooke, had lost, before this occurred, any interest in food. But I saw later the hardened sampan sailor Yoshi, in the galley, bending over a bowl of rice.

It was night by this time, and our course took us almost due south, beyond sight of even the southeastern islands of Hawaii. The night whirled past, cleft by the high sharp plunging bow. In the pilot house, an electric binnacle lamp glowed, in a milk tin, over the white disc of the compass. Alec chanted solemnly in Tahitian, swinging his weight on the great wheel as the needle wabbled crazily with the impact of seas upon the hull.

My bunk was one of the two farthest forward in the fo'c'sle, where converging timbers made a narrowing **V**. Lying on the hard mattress, I could hear the slap of waves on the outer side of the ribless pine planking; the groaning of timbers as the ship plunged forward; the various noises of the engine, among them a rhythmic chirp like that of a cricket, rising shrilly above the subdued throb of the Diesel - a curiously lulling sound.

At times the ship seemed to hurtle through the air from wave to wave like one of the flying fish that plopped on the deck of nights. Lunging down the face of a wave, it would lift me bodily off the bunk, and drop me with a whack. The shutters of the hatch above banged incessantly; the pitching of the boat rang the bell forward of the pilot house; seas splashed against the house and rebounded down the ventilator and the hatch.

But we slept, and more or less heavily, until awakened by the change of watch at midnight or at four o'clock. It was a deep satisfaction to wake in that narrow room, and, even while bumping one's head on the timbers with the jostling of the seas, to think: "Today I don't have to go to the office.' And to stand at the wheel, eyeing the needle as it swung back and forth across "170 S-SE," steering for our first low island.

Those first days had their difficulties. A sampan is not, at best, as stable as a passenger liner. And there were little accidents that made it no easier. The expedition had been carefully planned, but it could scarcely have been foreseen that fuel oil would get into the drinking water, or that in the confined storage space the food would absorb the taste of gasoline. A notation in my journal, the second day out, comments: "Oranges have this merit: they taste the same going both ways." Dr. Cooke had put several crates of them aboard, and we practically lived on them. Our progress south might have been traced by the orange peels floating astern.

Fosberg staggered out of his bunk to the lee side where the more active of us lay in a half-stupor, sprawled across the orange crates and cases of gasoline.

"Where's Ernest? I think I could take some beef tea."

Ernest appeared.

"Ernest, will you make us some beef tea?"

Ernest looked blank. "Beef tea?"

"Yes, beef tea. Here are the cubes; dissolve them in boiling water."

Ernest tottered into the galley, and emerged, after some time, bearing bowls of the steaming brew. Fosberg took one taste, then hurled the contents overboard, and returned to his bunk muttering in disgust.

I was curious. "Ernest, how did you make that beef tea?"

"Just like he told me. I made tea, and then put the cubes inside."

I was one of the first to recover. Yoshio had rigged a light at night over the stern; flying fish leaped aboard, and he fried them in the morning, crisp and tasty, with mealy boiled taro. The third day, the savory odor lured me to the galley, and after a meal of "flesh of freshly fried flying fish," I felt like a new man.

And so, day by day and night by night, we sped south, watching the sea run by. Between tricks at the wheel, we sat on the narrow deck along the lee side and told stories, or, at night, sang Hawaiian songs under the changing stars. Waves toppled over the pilot house and drenched us. Emory amused himself and the party by making Hawaiian string figures - an island counterpart of the "cat's cradle" of American youth - of which he had collected seventy-two series.

No ship appeared in sight, nor any land: only the infinite variety, within infinite sameness, of the waves; the fantastic shapes of clouds; the march of constellations and the glow of phosphorus at night in the furrow that slanted off at either side from the bow.

"This," somebody said, "is probably the loneliest stretch of ocean anywhere."

"The sea," offered Sam, "is just a lot of hard, dirty work."

"The sea," Mac continued, "is just something you have to cross to get to places."

So indeed it had seemed, in those first few days, to the wretched lot of us on the orange crates and gasoline cases along the lee rail. But all save one or two scientists were functioning by the fourth day. The Doldrums - to the disappointment of suffering botanists - were not as quiet as their name had led us to expect, but they gave us very fine weather. Bill, in pajama shirt and dungarees, sat on the roof of the pilot house shooting at flying fish with a small rifle; Bubbles, his dog, barked excitedly at each shot.

Small events took on importance in the monotony of sea days. A fish on the line Dr. Cooke was trolling astern; a shark off the starboard bow; porpoises to port; sea birds from the Line Islands, wheeling overhead or diving for fish; Enoka caught one on the trolling-hook, hauled it in and tossed it into the air, bewildered but free.

It was in those days that Dr. Cooke opened the first keg of salt beef.

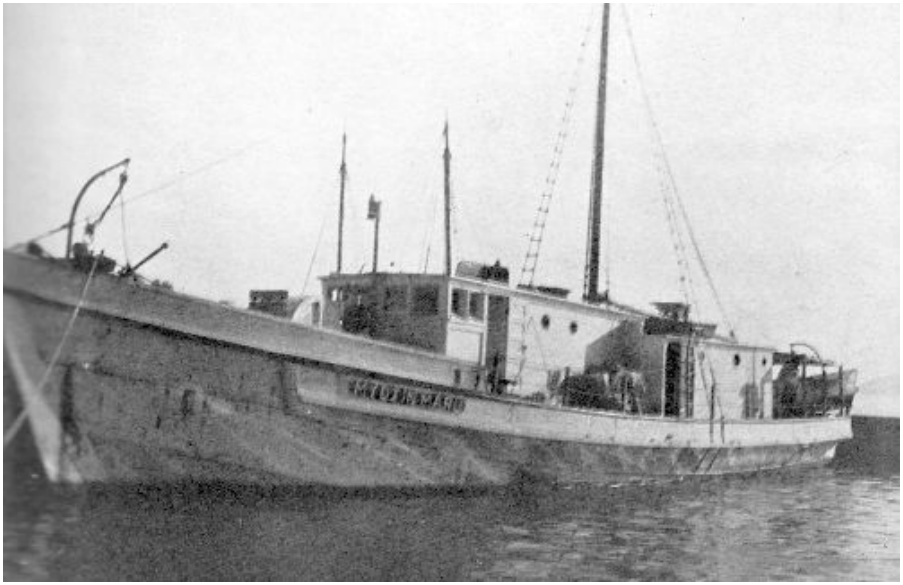
"Monty's getting restless," Sam had been warning us. "He won't be able to lay off that salt horse much longer. He's been planning this expedition for thirty years, and he's had his heart set on having salt beef, like his ancestors had when they came around the Horn in the 1820's."

Ernest eyed the preserved meat doubtfully but took it into the galley to do his best-or worst-with it. At the evening meal, we all watched Dr. Cooke as he lifted a leathery morsel to his lips. Tough and tasteless as it was, he never changed expression or flickered an eyelash.

"Boys," he declared, "it's bully!"

But even salt beef didn't matter now, any more than the endless cold corned beef which Ernest opened, can after can, and the pale canned salmon - the kind that normally is fed to cats - with which he alternated it. For all but one or two, the sea was friendly again; the ship had become our home.

The sampan *Islander*, née *Myojin Maru*, lay at dock in her American home port of Honolulu, ready for the voyage to the Dangerous Islands.



Sampan *Islander* at Papeete, still bearing her old name *Myojin Maru*.

The puka (Pisonia grandis) has given its name to many islands in the South Seas, among them Napuka, called by its inhabitants Tepuka Maruia: Maruia's Puka Trees. The puka was a sacred tree: its leaves, tied to the end of a carved stick, consecrated the turtle when that sacrificial reptile was slain on the sacred place.

3. The Footprint of Heaven

"LAND!" shouted Alec from the top of the stubby mast where he clung like the fanciful sailors of our boyhood sea books.

Where?"

"Dead ahead .... See the green light along that bank of clouds? That's Fanning Island."

Even the landlubbers among us could make out that faint greenish discoloration of the sky that marked, on the fifth day out of Honolulu, our first low-island landfall. Gradually the land appeared: an elongated swelling on the horizon, notched with the tips of palms. As we approached, the concrete buildings of the cable station and the high thatched roof of the quarters of the Gilbertese police stood out among the coconut trees in the equatorial afternoon.

Silent and deserted the shore seemed, with the surf creaming against its abrupt beach, while the whistle of the *Islander* bellowed a greeting amid the screaming of sea birds. But a surfboat manned by stocky, smartly uniformed Gilbert Islanders, rowing with tick-tock precision, brought the British medical officer to inspect us for admission. Then Bill ordered: "Let her out!" and we sped around the end of the island and through the narrow pass into the lagoon, to anchor off the copra station of Fanning Island Ltd. The little settlement was a gracious sight beneath the tall palms. The farther shores were out of view, curving for miles into the misty afternoon.

Gilbertese laborers, in red kilt-like garments, gathered on the shore. Hugh Greig, big and hearty labor superintendent, came aboard to greet us, and the stout Britons of the copra station made us welcome with heroic efforts at entertainment. Lavish as they were with Scotch-and-soda and cold New Zealand beer, our sea-grimed company appreciated most the shower baths of that well-appointed colony and the chance to sleep in comfort ashore.

The newer houses at Fanning are well designed for the tropics: a long enclosed veranda with a central row of rooms having open archways instead of doors, through whose unglassed windows the breeze cools every room. The temperature remained even, all night. On this inner lagoon shore there was no steady drumbeat of surf or far-away roar; only soft broken dashing, and now and then the dry banging of coconut crabs fencing with huge claws. I awoke to swim in the warm, quiet water of the lagoon, while my first low island sunrise spread incredibly varied coloring over sea and sky.

Great sea birds flew slowly over us as Hugh Greig, standing in the bow of the speedboat, piloted us that afternoon to the other end of the atoll.

"Fresh water doesn't mix with salt water," was his explanation of the yellow color of parts of the lagoon. "And there's some color from the reef .... In dry seasons, slime from the coral drifts in and poisons the beach; great sandworms come out of their holes and die, and the place reeks with decay."

A path led down the shore among the densely growing palms. Here, clearing away dead coconut fronds and empty shells, sending absurd, ugly crabs scuttling to their holes, we stood among the shattered tombs of kings. Scattered and broken, but still recognizable in outline, the ancient enclosures lie - the stones beautifully cut and laid, with carved shoulders and ornamental tops. Farther inland we came upon more ruins - compartments within enclosures, roofed with great flat slabs. Probing in the dust with a stick, Hugh brought up a fragment of bone.

"These ruins," Emory pronounced, "must be at least five hundred years old."

Looking upon the ancient stones, we thought of the life that must have gone on along these lagoon beaches: the arrival of the great canoes, bearing perhaps some chief defeated in war, and the remnant of his people; or a younger son departing for new lands to build a kingdom of his own the establishment of a settlement; the building of these sacred places where perhaps food was offered to the gods and the ancestral spirits placated; the hewing of these slabs on the outer reef and the carrying overland in baskets or slung to poles borne on the shoulders of men.

"The Manihiki people knew these islands," said Hugh, who, like his cousin our captain, stems from that race of mighty seamen. "They sailed here on the southeast trades. They named this island Tapuaerangi, the Heavenly Footprint, and if you look at a map of the island, you'll see how right they were. It's the perfect shape of a foot.

"At Washington Island we dug up a canoe buried in the peat bog. As far back as we know, the lagoon has been closed, and fresh or brackish water in it from the rains, but there are remains of sea growths inside it. And the Manihiki people say there was once a pass into Washington lagoon.

"A Manihiki man used to go there often. Once he asked for a malatea, the finest fish in any of these lagoons. The people gave him only the head of the fish, and he was angry. Lying off the island in his canoe, he called down the curse of the gods. The island turned upside down, and no malatea have been found there since."

Back at the cable station landing, we waited for the botanists to return from inland. Hugh Greig picked up a hermit crab and whistled softly until the curious little creature came out of its borrowed shell.

"Father Rougier, on Christmas Island, once set out to go around the island. It's a big island, and he had to sleep out two or three nights. The first night, the hermit crabs nipped him so he couldn't sleep. He built a wall of rocks around his cot, and they climbed over it. The next night he slung it like a hammock between two trees, and they climbed the trees and dropped down on him. The

third night he set the legs of the cot in big tins of water, and the crabs bridged it with their shells and bodies and got to him just the same."

The cooking-fires were flickering out when Keneti and I walked down the dark street of the Gilbertese village. One of the islanders hailed us from a rude veranda, and drew up mats for us to sit.

Our host tried manfully to bridge the gap of language. Pointing to his chest, he introduced himself:

"Boy-man-me-Lota!"

We reciprocated.

"Kaikai pish?"

Yes, we would eat fish. One of the women brought a bowl of boiled tridacna clam, still warm, tasting not unlike large oysters.

"*Vahine* . . . me . . . Porena," he introduced his wife. "No pickaninny."

Whereupon he inquired the names of our wives and the number of our "pickaninnies."

A lantern was brought out, and a thick book, which we identified as Hiram Bingham's translation of the Bible into Gilbertese.

"Bingama! Bingama!" they repeated, as, in the dim light, we tried to spell out some of the words. Their Micronesian dialect bears apparently only a very slight resemblance to the Polynesian. But our host taught us to say *kona mauri*, let there be life, and *tamaroa*, good, and *tia ka po*, good-by.

The atoll stretches in a double loop around a central lagoon, studded with coral heads. When Fanning Island Ltd. was formed in 1912, the land area was estimated at eight thousand acres, most of which has been planted thickly to coconuts.

At the time of our visit there were two hundred Gilbert Island laborers, brought on three year contracts.

"Many of them," said one of our British hosts, "like it so well they come back for another three years. They work a nine-hour day for a stated wage, plus quarters and ration according to government regulations. They do quite a bit of fishing, and save the tinned goods we issue them to take back to the Gilberts when their time is up.

"Each laborer is expected to gather three hundred pounds a day, and two hundred and fifty on Saturday. They go through the forest, chop the meat out of the nuts where they lie, and collect it in sacks."

The refuse, as we saw, remained on the ground, to breed mosquitoes, though at times a crew piled it up and burned it. Three cuts, and the meat was out; it should be chopped apart, the overseers said, so as not to mold. It was brought to the plant and spread on driers, on wheels so they could be rolled under cover in case of rain. After drying, it was sacked for shipment on a freighter that called at infrequent intervals.

Fanning is owned privately by the company, but has a commissioner under the British Gilbert Islands administration. Change was in the air when we were there. Washington Island, very fertile, with twenty-eight hundred

acres of coconut land, five hundred acres of fresh water lake and two hundred of peat bog, had been abandoned, and the men at Fanning spoke gloomily of the situation.

"The price of copra is no longer high enough to warrant keeping up such an elaborate establishment as we have here. This island will be closed down too, within a year."

And so it has been. The merry Britishers who plied us with Scotch and the latest London stories brought by the supply ship a few months before have been recalled; the Gilbert Islanders shipped back to their atolls in the west; Hugh Greig and his hospitable family have sought a home in lands farther south. Only the cable station remains. At English Harbor the roomy tropical houses stand empty to the breeze and whatever ghosts may be abroad; the crabs have their way with the coconuts that drop by thousands on the sand and coral soil, and the sparse grasses of a low island creep over the rusting rails and the deserted paths.

"An ideal airport," somebody observed, looking out across the great lagoon. "Blast out a few coral heads, and the air fleets of the world could ride here."

"And that four-knot current in and out of the pass would generate power to run a city," another continued. "Set up a reversible wheel in the lagoon entrance, connect the right transformers - and you'd have light, water, energy to turn all the machinery imaginable. . . ."

"There'll be a big hotel here some day - a pleasure resort for air travelers across the Pacific. Warm sea-bathing, a climate that doesn't change more than a degree or two, the world's best fishing - and you could stake out acres of golf courses, tennis courts, riding paths on the coral and sand flats. Canoeing, sailing, lovely tropical scenery - it has everything but surf-riding, and one might manage even that."

"It's coming. Copra goes, and something else comes in. The world will yet know Fanning."

"Perhaps so," I agreed. "But I should have liked it better when it was the Footprint of Heaven."

The *Islander* was rolling heavily as we left Fanning in a procession of squalls. Eating a hasty meal of raw fish in the galley with Enoka, I went below to change to dry clothes. As I returned on deck to seek a relatively sheltered spot to sit, Enoka pointed ahead.

"I tell you, we sleep good tonight."

The glass was falling, and we were putting back into Fanning lagoon for safety.

There followed pleasant days at Turefara, as the village was called by the Manihiki people who colonized it long ago. At Hugh Greig's, the last of that colony, we always found a welcome. A basket of fresh drinking-nuts hung always at the door of the rambling house; in the afternoon and early evening, Teanau and her children would be sitting on the mats in the pebble-floored

patio; there were songs and string figures, tales of how Maui learned the secret of fire from the white tern, and how he kicked the islands of Manihiki and Rakahanga apart, and chants of the ancestry of Teanau herself from the noble line of Mahuta. Or, as young Host Greig played Samoan, Hawaiian and Tahitian songs on his guitar, the two shy, large-eyed elder girls danced in a combination of styles gathered from half the Pacific.

It was there most of us were caught by the storm that so nearly cut short the expedition. Host, who had gone to school in Samoa, was leading in a nasal *himene* of that country:

> "Good-by, my friend,
> good-by, dear to my heart!
> Come back to Samoa,
> mindful of its beauty!"

In the midst of the merriment, the ship's whistle bored hollowly into the night. We rushed out into the rain, between the tall coconut trees that were swaying and creaking, bending nearly double with the rising wind. Broad sheets of lightning slashed through the tossing groves; great nuts hurtled past our heads and bounced from the coral ground. On we dashed, bare feet stumbling over the coral, through that confusion of alternate brightness and dark; rain drove blindingly, chokingly, into eyes, nose, ears, mouth; the trees strained more wildly at their anchorages as we ran, a tremendous swishing roar over all.

A glare of lights led us to the sea wall, off which we descried the *Islander*, listed ominously, and on her tilting deck the stout figure of Captain Bill, shouting through cupped hands words that blew away indistinguishably in the wind. We could see well enough what had happened. The *Islander* had dragged anchor; one shore line had parted, but the other, bent around a tree, had held and swung the ship inshore upon a bar, just in time to save her from drifting upon the grinding, sharp-toothed rocks near the pass.

Chilled through with the harsh wind in our drenched clothing, we stood shivering a moment; I had not thought one could be so cold, five degrees from the equator. Unmindful of sharks we plunged into the dark swirling water and waded and swam to the ship, glad to haul on the lines for warmth.

As we clambered up the overhanging side, grasping anxious hands of our mates aboard, we heard the mighty voice of Hughie Greig bellowing from the powerboat he had launched, with a crew of Gilbertese, to aid the rescue.

That night lives in memory as a confused scene of flashing lights, bare feet thudding on wet decks, and a medley of shouting in half a dozen obscure languages. A wide splash of lightning revealed at either side of me, hauling on the same wet line, a husky Gilbert Islander in a red kilt, who chanted with every pull, *Ta pu e! Ta pu e!*"

Somehow, between our own frantic efforts, directed b Captain Bill, and the strength of Hughie's powerboat, we hauled her off the sand. Then came the

crucial moment. Could we make headway against the wind and current, or would the ship, and we with it, be hurled to destruction. on the reef? As she seemed to waver and lose ground, gathering speed toward the death that waited, the throb of our own engine answered our fears. Yoshio and Enoka had stirred the Diesel to life, and by rare good fortune the propeller was not fouled with sand. Slowly she gained headway into the deeper and safer water farther up the lagoon, where we secured her with a borrowed anchor. We went no more ashore, save in twos and threes. Captain Bill was taking no more chances with tropical storms.

Life went on with little incidents, as we waited day after day in the shelter of the Footprint of Heaven for the barometer to climb back to normal and the sky to clear. There was the day we spent hours diving for the needle valve of one of the outboard motors, which had fallen into the lagoon; the day one of those motors failed, letting Bill, Sam and Enoka drift out to sea, until at last, just before night shut down, they persuaded the balky thing to start, and came in late with a fish dinner. On a later trip, Alec, similarly adrift, had to burn his shirt as a signal in the darkness so that Bill might find and rescue him.

There was the afternoon Fosberg tried to swim to the ship with a collection of empty square tea tins from the British settlement, for use in preserving his specimens. We saw him struggling in the outgoing current, tossing the tins ahead of him and swimming toward them, and the current pushing both him and the tins back - until, after much laughter and ribald advice, Mac and I dived in to help, and Yoshio rowed out in the skiff and rescued us all.

It was at Fanning that Bubbles' four pups were born. One, left at Fanning to be mascot of the island, failed to survive; a falling battery in Captain Bill's room crushed the life out of another, at sea; the third was left to delight the children of lonely Pitcairn, and the last was Annie, who remained with our company through many islands low and high.

There was moonlight on the lagoon, and great shadowy mantas waving through the water like monstrous marine bats, and the portable phonograph on the afterdeck in the quiet evening, playing *Kai Hawanawana* - "Whispering Sea."

4. The Road of the Plover

THE SOUTHERN CROSS was like a flower on a stalk over our bow as we throbbed through the seas toward Tahiti. Flying fish whizzed past our heads and thumped on the cabin walls. Rain squalls passed over us, and we ran out on the afterdeck to bathe in the showers. They were welcome, for the prudent captain had restricted the fresh water allowance, for all purposes, to a quart a day. More than once we all had lathered ourselves liberally with soap, when the rain squall missed us, leaving us a grotesque sight.

"About six o'clock this evening," Bill announced one morning, after taking eleven o'clock sights, "we cross the Line."

The crossing of that imaginary boundary between the northern and southern hemispheres is ordinarily attended with quaint ceremonies derived, no doubt, from Europe's pagan past. Whether the Polynesian voyagers who called it "the navel of God" had any such customs, surviving sea chants do not reveal. But no Father Neptune, resembling a somewhat tipsy Santa Claus, climbed over our bow to toss the first-timers into a pool. There was no pool. Bill blew the whistle at twenty minutes after six, and such of us as were able to stand tottered to the rope that served as a lee rail and - solemnly urinated on the equator!

There was such a lot of sea - great empty spaces between tiny islands. The ship was a self-contained unit, a little floating island in itself, but only temporarily so. Like a battery it must, from time to time, be recharged. There is no escape, for man, from land. This ship, that took us away from land, was fabricated on land, of materials land-grown. We could remain at sea only a few weeks at a time. The land went with us; the faded blue paint on these sampan timbers was a bit of Honolulu.

The sun sank behind a great cloud that bit into the sky like the beak of some feathered god. Sitting on cases of gasoline, we watched the southern constellations dip and wheel.

There was something eerie in our groping for that lonely island. With engine throttled down, searchlight futilely raking the sea ahead and to port and starboard, the crew crowded forward, straining for a glimpse in the gloom.

Somewhere in that cloudy darkness ahead was land - low land, fringed with reef, menacing.

Enoka stopped the engine and we waited, rocking gently, for a squall to pass; listening, as the rain sifted down, for sound of surf, and heard only the

cries of sea birds overhead.

Bill and Alec cast flashlight beams on the water alongside, studying, with the insight born of generations of experience in the Pacific, the sea's color and drift. Even as the clouds cleared slightly, we could see nothing.

"I smell land," said Alec, sniffing the air.

And it seemed to me that I, too, could detect the fishy reek of shore and the odors of vegetation inland.

Slowly we crept through the night, with many such halts, Bill crouching on the pilot-house roof all night, flashlight in hand.

At noon of the next day, he grinned as he took sights.

"Missed Vostok Island by twelve miles. First time I ever missed an island."

"Better to miss it than hit it," replied Dr. Cooke.

The land breeze was fragrant with gardenia and jasmine as we drifted, off Papeete, waiting for daylight of the ninth day out of Fanning. Slowly the land took form with the growing light: the contour of green slopes and valleys, the deep pocket of St. Mihiel, the cleft of Fautaua, the peak of Aorai wrapped in mist, and the town along the shore: a steeple, a red roof, the masts of schooners in harbor.

We were to see Papeete again, and know it better, but not to recapture the delicious strangeness of that early morning landfall. Its unpaved but fairly clean streets, its mingled European and southern Chinese architecture, the signs in French and Tahitian, were to become familiar; the endless stream of bicyclists across the waterfront, which seemed so odd to us at first, was to seem as natural as the motor traffic of Honolulu.

Papeete seemed a quiet place. There was no sound of machinery, comparatively little traffic. Cars moved slowly, with frequent, subdued blasts of horns - and everywhere were bicycles, sounding soft bells. Busloads of people were arriving and departing, to and from the country districts - Tahitians wearing, like Hawaiians, leis of flowers, and chattering gaily, with much laughter and many broad jests. Cars went by, filled with young people singing, as at home.

A sense of leisure and well-being emanates from one's first contact with this island - though, as I learned, it palls somewhat with time.

I am glad to have seen Loti's pool before it was modernized. We drove there on our first day in Papeete - nine of us in a big if somewhat dingy car, driven by one misnamed Tematai, the Wind.

"I drive slowly," Tematai explained, "because I don t want to catch up with that gendarme ahead of us. There are nine in the car, and the rules allow only seven."

The policeman, turning a corner on his bicycle, glanced back at us, causing us to quake inwardly with visions of being hauled off to jail - but forbearing to take official notice, he took the turning and disappeared.

In the narrow road up Fautaua valley, between walls of foliage, Sunday revelers were fighting; somebody was trying to drag the driver out of a car which was blocking the road ahead of us. We waited while the belligerents were parted, and drove around the obstruction as the principal warrior rushed back, with wild gestures, to renew the attack.

Loti's pool was then still in its natural state - a mountain stream of cold, clear water, deep enough for diving. Tahitian girls stood on a ledge, wrapped their skirts between their knees and dived, crossing their legs at the ankle, hitting the water, amid laughter, posterior first. A young man and a girl, with flowers over their ears, were caressing each other in a sheltered nook under the bank, half in and half out of the water, as Loti and his Rarahu may have done.

The natural beauty of the place was already doomed. At the custom house, next day, we saw the bust of Pierre Loti that was to mark the spot.

We swam, too, at Arue, a curve of black sand beach, fringed with coconut palms. But in the mood most of us were in, we were not greatly interested in show-points. We were impatient to complete the official formalities, in this town where one can get only about one thing done in a day, and move on to the Tuamotu.

"Our tape," said the interpreter at the Service du Passeport, "is very red."

The talk at Charles Nordhoff's handsome new house at Punaauia was of ships and reefs and currents, of fish and game. He was interested in stocking the streams of Tahiti with trout and its forests with quail.

Irène Salmon, daughter of kings, charming, intelligent and alert, served an excellent rum punch at the Tiare Tahiti, and spoke feelingly of the late Wilson, who had walked on the *marae* despite her entreaties and tears, and two weeks later was dead.

Odors of vanilla and copra will linger always about my memories of Papeete; cluttery Chinese stores, sound of revelry in Albert's bar; guitars, ukuleles, accordions, singing; girls with flowers in their long dark hair, diving off the dock or riding slowly past on bicycles - these and the sound of running water, the scent of jasmine and gardenia, the clouds forming around Aorai: these linger longest, from Great Tahiti of the Golden Haze.

5. Tall Tales in Tahiti

"I WILL TELL You," said Hiro-i-te-maro-ura, "the true origin of the Polynesians."

I had been wandering about the unpaved but cleanly streets and somewhat dingy shops of Papeete, bargaining in lame pidgin-Tahitian and equally lame French with Chinese merchants, when Hiro of the Crimson Loincloth hailed me from the street and led me to his parked car; for though he was, as he informed me, of royal lineage, in these degenerate days he drove not, like his distinguished namesake and ancestor, a three-masted ship, but a four-cylinder rent-car.

He was a rather fat part-Tahitian, shabbily dressed and in need of a shave, but with a certain authority of manner.

"I will tell you," he repeated, "the real origin of the Polynesians."

"If you can do that," I replied, "you will go the scientists one better. They have a plausible theory, supported by considerable evidence, but they do not speak of it with such conviction."

"That is because they are guessing, and I know," said Hiro. "It is part of the secret wisdom handed down from my ancestors."

"My family, you must know, were the royal family of Borabora and the real rulers of the islands. Tahiti was the island whither they came for sacrifices. When the great marae was built at Papara, twelve hundred warriors lay down with their spears and were buried alive under the stones to guard the sacred place."

"But what about the origin of the Polynesians?"

"I am coming to that. But first I must tell you the history of my family, that you may know I speak with authority. As I was saying, they were kings. My great-grandfather, however, was an Irishman, who landed from a ship at Borabora and wandered into the interior. At that time the people of our country were not debilitated as you see them now by the vices introduced by the white men. As my great-grand father walked from village to village, he found many boxing matches in progress, and being a man of sporting blood and powerful physique, he took part in them. At last he came to the place where the champion of the island lived, and challenged him. The king heard of it, and announced that the winner of this match should be rewarded with the hand of the princess.

"All the chiefs sat around the arena, and the king and his family sat in the place of honor beside the ring.

"My great-grandfather walked into the ring, feinted once, and struck. The

champion went down. Twice, three times, four times, my great-grandfather struck - and the champion lay still. My great-grandfather married the king's daughter.

"He was a man, my ancestor. Once . . ."

"I'll grant all that. But you were going to tell me about the Polynesians."

"I will tell you. Have you read the Bible?"

"Most of it," I admitted.

"You remember then the tribe of Dan, whose last survivor was Manoah, father of Samson. I will tell you how it came about that that tribe of Israel became the ancestors of the Polynesians.

"Twenty-five thousand men of the tribe of Dan served as an advance guard for the Israelites in the march of forty years in the wilderness, on their way from Egypt. Moses did not permit them, while they were on this duty, to approach their wives. Therefore they took mates from among the people of the country. These women, being heathen, persuaded the men to set apart a share of food for their gods.

"God was angry with the men of Dan for this idolatry, and in punishment He dispersed them to 'the isles of the sea.'

"On Tahiti there is a plateau called the Place of Lamentation. God descended there in a pillar of fire and told them He was leaving them here; they had worshiped the gods of the Gentiles and henceforth they would worship no other gods.

"There was another people in the islands - a dark people, the Papuans. Far up in the valleys, you can still see their terraces and house platforms of stone.

"For a time the two peoples lived in peace, but as the years went on, trouble arose. The Danites killed the men of the Papuans, but saved the women. These women taught their children the language of the country, and that is why we do not speak Hebrew today.

"The Tahitians who sprang from this union were a light dark people of great stature. They kept the ancient law of Moses, until they were corrupted by the whites.

"I tell you these things, because I have heard that you are a writing man. I tell you, that you may write the truth about us."

Some reward, however, seemed in order. The descendant of Hiro of the Crimson Loincloth did not demur when I suggested a visit to Bohler's bar. There, over a rum punch, he resumed his tale.

"My people, as I was telling you, kept the ancient law until the white men introduced evil. Now we are dying away. In my great-grandfather's time there were thousands of people where there are now but tens. There was no disease, no immorality among our people. These things and the white men's ways have brought us ruin.

"But caves still exist where bones and bodies of warriors lie - giants, they were: their bones are larger than the bones of men today.

"The last king died without issue, but his sister bore children for him to

the Irishman, my great-grandfather. When the rights in the property on Borabora were in question, my auntie arose in the meeting and said:

" 'I have eaten all your brains. This Pomare family, they are not true Tahitian; they are Paumotuan. They were raised up by the missionaries; they are not the real kings of Tahiti.'

"Now, promise me that when you go back to your own country you will write what I have told you, that your people may know."

"I promise," I said gravely.

From a scientific viewpoint, Hiro's tale has its flaws. But, not being a professional ethnologist, I could find it vastly entertaining, and having no scientific reputation to jeopardize, I can retail it for its own sake as a story. I promised Hiro I'd tell it - and I have kept my word.

There was a feast at Méré's the night before we sailed, reminiscent of a Hawaiian *luau*, but with French instead of American influence superimposed upon the underlying Polynesian. Méré Stimson, the charming and intelligent young grandmother who had nominated herself a mother to us all, presided over a board that held such delicacies as pickled raw fish, to be dipped in sweet-salty coconut sauce; fresh-water shrimps in fermented coconut; mountain bananas that grow straight up in the air instead of hanging down as proper bananas should; sweet potatoes; mealy sections of baked bread fruit; two kinds of Tahitian *po'e* - the sweet pudding that does not resemble Hawaiian poi except in name and stickiness - all to be dipped into the cool delicious milk of coconut, squeezed out of the grated pulp and mixed with salt water and with all this, much wine.

Every guest must wear a chaplet of fragrant blossoms; garlanded with these, the elder and more dignified members of our party resembled Roman emperors. There must be song and dance, Tahitian and French songs; Hawaiian songs stepped up to the brisk Tahitian tempo and sung with Tahitian words.

The gods of evening shook out their crimson cloaks over many-spired Moorea; Tahiti was rose and green with the afterglow, and the lights were blossoming along the shore as the *Islander* chugged past the fishermen on the reef, outward bound. The deck was piled high with baskets of papaya, limes, pineapples, husked drinking-coconuts; clusters of oranges swung in fiber nets; bunches of bananas swayed with the motion of the boat. Scientists and crew lounged about the tilting deck in brilliant loincloths.

"Sam," said Dr. Cooke, as we sat at table in the little cabin, "I think we should open a bottle of that rum we bought in Papeete to entertain officials in the islands down below. We ought to find out whether it's good quality."

Pouring a moderate portion into one of the battered metal cups, he tasted it critically.

"Sam, how many bottles of this did you buy?"

"A dozen."

"Well, I think we ought to have twelve dozen."

Another sip: "Twelve dozen isn't going to be enough; we should have twenty-four dozen."

There was laughter around the table as our jocular leader, pretending with each sip to become more and more merry, raised the jestingly "required" number step by seep to a hundred and forty-four bottles!

We were off for the Dangerous Islands, glad to be on our way, but leaving a bit of all our hearts in Tahiti, where we had found so gracious a welcome.

6. Abandoned Island

FROWNINGLY the black lava rocks of Meetia split the white spray, but the steep cone of its extinct volcano was rosy with morning as we skirted, the next morning, its abrupt coasts, scanning the surf that broke threateningly on its two uncertain landing places.

Meetia is a small island rising sharply from a narrow beach in a tall shoulder of mountain visible for sixty miles at sea. Though only a day's run from Papeete, it is seldom visited. Lonely in its corner of the Pacific, only the eyes of its wild birds and the wild swine that roam its forests look upon the chameleon changes of color of its ancient dome beneath the shifting light of day.

This is Great Meetia of the Brackish Water, once populous and an independent kingdom, now a silent island, a place of ruin under the curving sky.

My first landing on an unprotected South Sea shore was an initiation. The small landing boat took off from the sampan and wove in among the rocks of a tiny cove. The first and second trips were made without mishap.

"If I signal, bring my Leica ashore," directed Keneti as he embarked with the second load.

The rest of us watched the boatmen threading the few hundred yards of open water and the narrower but more hazardous band of surf. Keneti stood on a projecting rock and waved. Wrapping his camera hastily in a towel, I dropped into the boat with the third landing party.

Tané, the big Tahitian sailor lent us by Charles Nordhoff as pilot, and Kahiu, the Reao islander who had signed on at Papeete, steered between two black boulders. Looking back, I saw a wave rising; my Waikiki-trained eyes telegraphed a warning to my mind, but I reflected that Tané and Kahiu were experts at this business and it was not for a stranger from a far country to distract them with amateur advice.

The boat rose on the wave, hung over a rock, swerved side wise. The next wave, hitting the boat before Tané and Kahiu could maneuver us to safety, hurled the craft end over end. I slid into the water on my right shoulder and back, holding the camera aloft with my left hand. Swimming hastily to the ledge on which Keneti was waiting, I handed the camera up to him, luckily undamaged, a split second before the third wave tossed me skidding over the sharp and slippery rocks.

Bruised and gashed, but with no bones broken, I was able to fight my way out with the rest who had rushed into the water to help Tané and Kahiu save

the boat. Landing again, we clambered up the steep cinder slope, sliding and stumbling as it crumbled under our feet, to the trail between the two landing places. Here Keneti and I left the others to struggle up the mountain in quest of plants, insects and shells, while we followed the long disused trail. Hutu trees dripped great pompons of flowers-white, purple, yellow at the ends, surrounded by cream-white petals dropping away; their dark torpedo-shaped poisonous nuts lay thickly scattered under foot; ferns, coconuts, the broad leaves of apé, sprang vigorously out of the dark volcanic soil.

We stumbled along the overgrown trail, gathering limes and oranges by the way, now and then sent sprawling b some unobserved, tripping vine. Bananas ripened in these still groves, and fell in dissolving heaps among the dead leaves. Vanilla-orchids climbed on the poles set up by vanished colonists; breadfruit grew round and full on the great trees with their broad-fingered foliage.

Over Meetia hung an atmosphere of silence and desertion - silence, despite the crowing of cocks that have run wild in its forests, the song of innumerable mosquitoes, and the steady rumble of the surf.

So we came to a marae, and digging in it, turned up a few bits of bone. A marae is a melancholy place: heaps of stones, somber gray or blackened with weather, overgrown with weeds. There is a feeling about it of a place of people long dead, an atmosphere of decay and of a silence that seems waiting - as if the spirits of those ancient builders who worshiped here were peering silently from behind the gloomy trees.

At a corner of the platform, a banana plant drooped a huge cluster that touched the ground-perfect fruit, bursting with ripeness, and untouched by rats.

"A native would say," remarked Keneti, "that the rats respect the sacredness of the place."

Sitting upon a stone quarried generations ago, he told me something of the story of this island, as he had learned it from old men of the Tuamotu.

"Its chief, eight hundred years ago, was noted for his hospitality. Seeing a Tahitian chief passing in a canoe, he invited him to visit the island. A feast was given, and the local chief lent his wife to the visitor, as was the custom.

"When the child of this temporary union was born, rule of the island passed, through him, to Tahiti."

Leaving a handful of ripe bananas on the disordered altar, an offering to its lonely gods, we followed the trail to the village: a group of iron-roofed houses, unpainted, their door yards high with weeds. Pumpkin or squash vines sprawled across the gardens; yellow papayas were dropping from the overgrown trees.

We lunched, squeezing upon the melon-like fruit the acid juice of limes, in the grassy backyard of the nearest house, and bathed in water from the rain barrel, in which innumerable mosquito larvae wriggled with their peculiar restlessness.

It was a pleasant, if lonely, place, this deserted village, with a few rusted implements still lying about its wind-torn cook sheds, and the silence crowding in upon the houses under the mellow sunlight and brooding among the prodigiously tall banana plants.

As we lay on the long grass, absorbing the wistful, lonely atmosphere, we heard the long, conchlike bellow of the ship's whistle, and began the half mile hike over the shoulder of the mountain to the landing.

Getting off the island was as difficult as getting on. As I waded out and threw the sack of limes into the tossing boat, a wave somersaulted me over a rock. Coming up, I clambered in beside the limes before the next wave struck, as Tané and Kahiu rowed hurriedly out of the cove.

"Why did the people leave Meetia?" I inquired later in Papeete. "Was it because the prices of copra and of vanilla went down?"

"No; they could always live on the fruits of the land. But the ships came so seldom. Our people like company, and laughter, and song. Meetia is a lonely place, and the spirits of its ancient dead lurk in the gloomy wood."

And yet - Meetia is, in its way, a lovely spot: fruitful far beyond the capacity of the hundred-odd isles that lie between it and Mangareva. It once supported an independent, if small, nation. Its fields and forests and the waters around it could feed a substantial community.

Alone in its corner of the sea, an opalescent jewel, its mountain glimmers in the changing light - a land rich in treasures of earth and sea; an empty land, a lone land, waiting.

7. The Shaven Sea

"TANÉ HAS ELEPHANTIASIS," said Mac. "See how he drags that leg, under his big dungarees."

"He has worse than that," put in Sam. "We didn't notice, when he came aboard, because he had a shirt on but watch him in the galley, with his shirt off or the sleeves rolled up. I can't eat any bread he makes, with those running sores on his arms."

"I've given him strict orders," Dr. Cooke reassured us, "not to touch anything in the galley with bare hands."

We were sixteen, now, aboard; more crowded than ever with the addition of "Zimmy" the entomologist, Kahiu the Reao sailor, and Tané, the giant pilot and emergency "cook." The scientists occupied eight of the cabin bunks; the remain ing two were piled high with their specimens and equipment. The original "crew" occupied the fo'c'sle; Tané and Kahiu spread their mats anywhere on deck. What they would have done had there been rain, I never learned. There had been rain and plenty of it on the voyage down, and the scientists came to envy us our dry berths in the fo'c'sle, as they wallowed in pools of water that drove through the shrunken matchboards of the flimsy cabin into their bunks.

Yet we continued harmonious in these close quarters. We were well fed now, while the fruits of Tahiti and of Meetia lasted. The sea was calm, and we were hardened to the life. It was an easy time for the crew. Tane and Kahiu did most of the work - although that feature was not without its disadvantages.

"I hate to take the wheel after Kahiu," Zimmy confessed. "Notice how he blows his nose in his hand and wipes the hand on the wheel?"

Keneti and I sat on the cabin roof in the cool evening, singing snatches of Hawaiian and Tahitian songs and talking of the life of the islands whither we were bound.

"We don't see much of that life," I complained. "A few hours, a day, on an island, and the natives all dressed up in white men's clothes to greet the visitors, and dropping their regular habits. I don't even have a chance to learn to talk with them. It's like the saying in the navy: 'Join the navy and see the world - through a porthole.' "

"Pari," he suggested, using the Polynesian version of my name, "why don't you get off with me at Napuka? I've decided to do my work there instead of at Reao. Reao is foll of leprosy and the government has quarantined the place. So I am going to Napuka, a more pleasant island and as unspoiled.

"People haven't been there much. It's too hard to get to. Ua and Harry and

I spent a few days there four or five years ago, and they said we were the only white men who ever stayed overnight on the island, except the Catholic missionaries.

"They were so unaccustomed to white men that at first we thought they were hostile, for they never smiled - just stood around and eyed us. Later we found out that they didn't know the meaning of a smile. When we smiled at them, they were insulted; thought we were laughing at them.

"Every house is native style, and the food is mostly native food. Probably that's why the people are healthy. Too poor to buy foreign things.

"I think you'd like the place. We'll be there five weeks; then Bob Burrell will pick us up in the *Tiare Tahiti* and you can catch a copra schooner somewhere that will take you to join the sampan at Mangareva or Rapa so you will miss only a part of the general trip.

"You'll learn the language. You'll have to. There's not a soul on the island who can speak anything else. And I hope to pick up some rare old chants there.

"I'm anxious to get off this ship and be among natives. It's all right for these fellows who are hunting bugs and plants and shells. But for us who are interested in human life and customs, it isn't so good."

When Sam heard of it, he remarked scornfully:

"I'm glad I don't have to be cooped up on a low island for five weeks. It would be like five weeks in jail."

"Better in jail than cooped up on a floating pesthouse with that loathsome hulk of rotting flesh."

The *Islander* was not, of course, quite that, and the fact that our shipmates escaped contagion indicates the probable error of the belief of all of us, at the time, that our lately acquired pilot carried a dangerous disease. Aside from that possibility, and the advantages the island offered for study of ancient and contemporary Polynesian life, there was reason in Sam's words. We were cutting ourselves off from all possible communication with the ship or with any civilized aid. Illness or injury would have to be met with our meager emergency kit, quite inadequate for any serious trouble. Schooners call seldom in that outlying region of the Tuamotu; wireless is one of the marvels of the white man's magic of which the natives have heard, but for which there are no facilities. Until the *Tiare Tahiti* appeared to pick us up, we were there for better or for worse, on a precarious bit of coral only a few feet above the sea in ordinary weather and submerged, in times of the dreaded hurricane, beneath floods of almost inconceivable violence.

Keneti had ample supplies of tinned food, better selected than that aboard ship. The island, as we knew, abounded in fish, shellfish and coconuts. We were confident of our ability to meet any but the most extreme situations, and as we then believed, it was for only a few weeks.

We could not foresee that adverse winds, repairs to the *Tiare Tahiti*, and complications at Papeete would stretch our contemplated five weeks at

Napuka to more than twice that length of time; that for nearly three months we should not see a white face. But there was little to regret. Keneti found so much ethnological material that he could have spent profit ably there almost the entire duration of the trip; and I found there the rest I sought - deep sun-sweet days and surf-lulled, breeze-cooled nights, among a friendly and absorbingly interesting people, on the Isle of Peace.

8. Flying Spears

IN THE DAWN of a bright South Sea Sunday we glimpsed the green glow in the sky that reflects the lagoon of Anaa, and a little later anchored off its rock-strewn shore and its squat white coral lighthouse-one of the few navigation lights in all the Dangerous Islands.

The great, shallow lagoon, surrounded by the eleven islets that caused early navigators to name the atoll "Chain Island," stretched away for miles, visible through an opening in the reef.

This, then, was the Tuamotu: poverty-stricken, but cheerful. In the days of high prices for copra and pearl-shell, the natives had learned to buy tinned foods and rice from the Chinese store, and bread from the Chinese baker; now the bottom had fallen from their market; they must go back to fish and coconuts - which might save them, if it was not too late. Such was the conversation aboard as we dropped anchor in the clear blue and green water, amazingly near the reef.

Anaa boasts also that rarity in the Tuamotu, a small wharf, at which our landing boat drew up, and a smooth road leading toward its principal village. This island is said to have been the first point of contact with Europeans among the isles of those seas.

"Spaniards landed here in 1606," Keneti told us. "They re ported that the first woman they saw wore a gold ring, and they saw a redwood log on an island where no redwood grows.

"The log probably drifted from the American continent, but where did the ring come from? There is no gold in the Tuamotu, or in Tahiti. Is there truth in the gues of some ethnologists that the Polynesian navigators voyaged to the coast of South America? Or did some shipwreck leave that band of yellow metal on this unknown chain of islets?

"In 1723, it is said, six white sailors mutinied and stayed at Anaa. I wonder how they liked the rude life of a low island, and what desperation drove them to choose it. They must have lived in thatched huts like overturned canoes, subsisting on fish, coconuts and pandanus, consoled by savage mates. No doubt they took part in the wars that raged throughout the eastern and central Tuamotu."

For the people of Anaa were a warlike race, in the cruel old days, and conquered many of the neighboring islands. Now, as we saw them lounging about the landing, they looked a wretched lot, though better specimens appeared in the spear-throwing contest in the afternoon.

The village of Tukuhora is on the lagoon shore - a village mainly of frame

houses, usually with a native-style house of coconut leaves in connection, perhaps for use as a kitchen. One of these frame houses was raised high on a platform of coral and plaster. Most of them are fenced, to keep out pigs, with a low place in the fence for entry and exit of human beings. Anaa people prefer to step over, rather than to open and close gates.

The sound of singing came from the village church as we passed, on the way to the house of Tumu, our guide for the day, where drinking-nuts were opened for the visitors. It was a typical Tuamotuan Sunday: the people, dressed in their best clothes, sat around after the services, looking bored. Tukuhora, at this time, had a decidedly depressing effect. We were better pleased with Otepipi, a village farther down the lagoon, where Tumu guided four of us in the ship's out board motor skiff-not without some wading and pushing the boat over shallows.

It was a neat village, with a walled churchyard, and with flowering plants set out before the houses, in borders of inverted beer bottles.

"Anaa," the chief of that village told us, "was once the most fertile of all the Tuamotu. We brought soil from Tahiti; we planted breadfruit, bananas, and other food plants. But the hurricane came, and the borrowed soil was torn away.

"Hundreds of people died in that storm. Look yonder at those shattered walls. There stood the government house, and there the church. Our people climbed into trees, but many of the trees were washed away. Those who survived had no food till the government ship came from Tahiti."

The villagers, dressed for Sunday - some even in white coats and Chinese-made tennis shoes-welcomed us gravely, showed us with pride their new church, and its altar inlaid with pearl shell.

They gathered about us on the little pier that extends into the lagoon, while the botanists, through Keneti's interpretation, questioned them as to the native names of plants.

"These names must be worth much money," said one shrewd native, "that the Americans send men so far to get them."

"The scientific names are much more valuable," replied the quick-witted Keneti. "Such as Guettarda speciosa and Tournefortia argentea. Do you want to buy any of our names?"

They were impressed, and decided to trade even.

Landing on the main islet, we trudged through thickets of the low shrubs that grow in that sparse coral soil, fighting off clouds of mosquitoes with sprays of leaves, and stumbling over jagged rock seamed with dangerous crevices: the weather worn coral of an upraised atoll.

As we returned to Tukuhora village, a javelin-throwing contest was in progress. Thirty men, with spears about six feet long, tipped with iron, but light and springy, were casting at a coconut on a pole some thirty feet high, from a distance of about sixty feet.

Clad in dungarees though they were, the resumed in this martial exercise

something of the savage aspect that must have marked their conquering ancestors. Steadying the light shaft with the left hand, they threw underhand with the forefinger of the right, in beautiful precision. Seemingly tossed but lightly, in a casual manner, the spears, crooked though many of them were, hit the mark in surprising numbers, till it bristled with them like a sea-urchin, and with such force that the points often pierced the nut and stood out on the other side. So many stuck in the nut that the later throws often hit them and glanced off. Those that missed sailed on across the street and remained standing in a vacant lot near a booth bearing the French flag and a sign reading "*Vive le Gouver neur*!"

The village postmaster, a dignified native, explained in Tahitian-patois French:

"This is a competition among eight groups from five villages, each with seventy spears. The spears have marks to identify them, and thus the score is kept. The men throw for twenty minutes, then change goals, setting the mark on an other pole. Sometimes they start as early as eight o'clock in the morning and keep it up all day."

This spear exercise seems to be the only reminder now-a-days of the warlike past of this island.

"The northern and central Tuamotu," Tumu related, "were two kingdoms, and eight islands west of Fakarava were independent. The islands farther east and south didn't count.

"Not long after the first Pomare had become king in Tahiti, the king of the north prepared to conquer the eight in dependent islands. But Pomare, who was descended from Tuamotuan chiefs, called a meeting, and took all the islands for his own kingdom.

"Pomare made all the chiefs agree that the flesh of men was no longer to be eaten. From that time on, we have not been eaters of men. But doubtless that custom would have passed away, too, when there were no more wars."

The Pomare are gone now, too; the last queen of the line died recently in Papeete. But their islands lie, palm-crowned and pleasant, in the southern sea, and Anaa, land of darting spears, remembers when its name was feared throughout the coral rings.

About three o'clock of the next morning, at sea, there was a confused trampling on the deck, and the jar of engines re versing. Running between Faaite and Tahanea, we had come too close and were almost on the reef; only a quick shift and the power of the Diesel saved us.

In daylight we stopped in the lee of Katiu to pump bilges. Katiu is long, low and large; we could not see the opposite shore of its lagoon. The part near us had been ravaged by storm and was largely bare of trees. Though the island is said to be inhabited, we saw no signs save one empty house and the frame for another. Lonely and beautiful, the red reef gleamed in the morning sun.

To starboard, about fifty yards away, was Katiu; to port, out of sight,

Raraka; ahead, to the north, no more lands broke that lonely ocean between us and the oval ring of coral that was to be my home. The sharp prow cut into the calm sea. And so, after one more day's and night's voyaging, we came to Tepuka Maruia.

III

Isle of Peace

9. Leaves Out of the Past

VISITORS AT TEPUKA AND TEPOTO are received very differently now than in the time when Commodore John Byron gave them the name "Islands of Disappointment."

The green interior of Tepoto must have looked inviting to Byron and his scurvy-crippled men on that June morning - their first landfall since April. They had passed through the Strait of Magellan, halted briefly at Mas Afuero, off the South American coast; had sailed over the reputed location of "Davis Land," and on through wide empty seas.

The old-fashioned hand-set type of his record, deeply impressed into the discolored pages, calls up as vividly today the picture of that landfall a hundred and seventy-odd years ago.

They tried to land on Tepoto, "which, as we drew near it, had a most beautiful appearance; it was surrounded by a beach of the finest white sand; and within, it was covered with tall trees, which extended their shade to a great distance and formed the most delightful groves that could be imagined."

They wanted badly to land, for they could see coconuts in abundance, and the shells of turtles on the shore indicated a supply of fresh meat. Their hardship-sharpened imaginations even conjured visions of limes, bananas and other fruits that these coral islands do not yield.

A violent surf was breaking on the red reefs. The ancestors of my Tepoto friends threatened the intruders with spears, which to the eyes of Byron and his men seemed "at least six teen feet long," and enacted a savage pantomime, throwing themselves backward and lying as if dead, implying, the commodore surmised, that it would be death to set foot on these shores. The Tepoto men hauled their canoes up into the forest and went out into the water to seize the strangers' landing boat. The smoke of their signal fires on the shore was answered from Tepuka.

"They were of a deep copper color, exceedingly stout and well limbed, and remarkably nimble and active, for" (after the commodore, by way of impressing the islanders with the power of His Majesty's navy, had fired over their heads what was probably the first shot that ever woke the echoes of those groves) "I never saw men run so fast in my life."

Finding no anchorage, the explorers next day tried the neighboring larger atoll, where again men came to the shore with spears.

There appeared to be no chance of a landing without an armed encounter, so-

"At half an hour after ten, we bore away and made sail to the westward,

finding it impossible to procure at the islands any refreshment for our sick, whose situation was becoming more deplorable every hour, and I therefore called them the Islands of Disappointment."

Such is the account of the first white man known to have looked upon the two lands of the puka trees.

The next recorded visitors, an American naval party commanded by Charles Wilkes, seventy-four years later, found the natives much of the same disposition, but effected on both islands the first landing by white men of which any record survives.

Wilkes even exchanged presents with the chief, whom he describes as a very old man with legs enormously swelled and whitened by elephantiasis, and who pressed his face to that of the American commander, much to the latter's disgust, "making a noise like the purring of a cat."

Wilkes' Maori interpreter, incidentally, picked up "names" for the two islands, which they still bear on many charts but which natives of the islands today do not recognize in any of their traditions. My own guess is that he repeated here the incident of the Spaniards at Yucatan. When asked for the name of the country, the native addressed probably replied, "Who are you?" and those words in the island language were solemnly written down, somewhat garbled, as the name.

Wilkes' memoirs of the voyage record an instance of what we could recognize as typical Tuamotuan humor. Noticing that no women or children were in sight, the visitors inquired where they were, whereupon:

"A general burst of laughter ensued, and they gave us to understand that they had penetrated our motive for visiting the island; that as we inhabited an island without any women, we wanted to have some.

"Nothing more was said to them on the subject," adds the prudent commander.

Drayton, artist of the expedition, made drawings of natives in which I can trace resemblances to men living there today. One of them reveals unmistakably the family traits of our acquaintance Varoa.

Catholic missionaries later entered through a local man who had been converted elsewhere and who prepared the way. Thus the islands became "tamed" for Christianity and incidentally for trade.

Perhaps we owe it to those black-robed priests of sixty years ago, that we were met with gifts of food and drink instead of spears. We should be grateful, no doubt, like that man in Hawaii who, long ago, inveighing to the king against the changes wrought by missionaries, expressed a wish that he could have been there in the pagan time.

"If you had," replied the king, "you might not have liked it so well. In the few minutes you have been in my presence, you have violated three tabus. Were this the pagan era, you would now have been dead three times."

But with the perversity of those who love Polynesians and Polynesian life, we were most glad for the shreds of ancient tradition and custom that still

remain; for old men's memories of the pagan time, for the simple ways of life that linger in that wreath-shaped land, and for the chants that sound thinly, solemnly, through the haunted night.

10. Ghosts

SOME TIME in the night of our first day on the island, I was awakened by a sound as of pebbles thrown against the side of the house. It was not a loud sound, but a definite one, and the pauses between were as of someone listening.

My first thought was that an early-rising pig or chicken had wandered against the house, but the beam of an electric torch, flashed into the darkness, revealed no living thing.

"Somebody is playing tricks," I concluded, though in view of the absence of cover for such a trickster to hide near the house, and the known reluctance of Tuamotuans to venture out at night without a light, this explanation was slightly lame.

"It was without doubt a spirit," said our neighbors next morning.

Such stone-throwing ghosts are common in the Tuamotu, the more so in the "civilized" iron-roofed islands where they can make more noise. All the islands are haunted; the imagination of the Polynesian has peopled his darkness, often with shapes of fear. The spirits of the newly dead wander abroad, seeking literally whom they may devour. This latter propensity of the nocturnal apparitions was less emphasized at Tepuka, and there may have been some connection of this omission with the contention, plausible enough, of the people of that island that they had never been cannibals. On the former man-eating islands, such as Vahitahi and Hao, it is a natural transition, as Stevenson pointed out long ago, from the eating of the dead by the living to the eating of the living by the dead, and a certain kind of spirit is therefore as greatly feared as the werewolves and vampires of medieval Europe. Nevertheless, the haunted darkness of the coconut groves was regarded with extreme caution by our friends and neighbors; nor would they sleep at night without a light in the house: a dim and smoky lantern, turned low, or if, as often happened, oil failed, a wedge of copra burning, propped upon a stone.

Our friends, however, were not alarmed on our behalf. It seemed, or so . I understood, that the pebble-tossing spirits were not especially harmful. The visitation of the night might be interpreted as a favorable omen rather than otherwise, signifying that the island spirits recognized our presence and were making us welcome. Moreover, the white man usually is immune from the attacks of the powers of Polynesian darkness. How else explain his recklessness in violating native custom, in sleeping without a light, in eating under a roof, in transgressing any number of prohibitions that have grown up in the half-light of remembered experience in these haunted lands?

I had occasion to observe this fear of the beings of darkness later when at her request I accompanied the daughter of Maru on an errand to the house of a relative, somewhat re mote from the main village. Temata led me along the road that leads to the cemetery, but struck away from it into the forest before we reached that point. She was taking no unnecessary chances.

Among the trees, however, she showed increasing alarm. Every large bush, every oddly shaped shadow caused her to clutch at me in fear. In the gloomiest portion of the wood, an ominous shape appeared suddenly out of the blackness and lurched across our path - a figure of more than human size, it seemed, and of scarcely human shape, with a great antlered head nodding through the gloom.

My companion, in terror, buried her face in my shoulder; I could feel her whole body quivering with fright.

"Let there be life!" said the apparition, and Temata burst out laughing with relief. She had recognized the voice of one of her own living relatives.

Our "ghost" was only an honest citizen of Tepuka who had been bold enough, or forced by necessity, to go out at night alone, and the oddity of shape was merely the effect, in the darkness, of the burden he carried on his shoulders.

On the way back, as we hurried over the stony paths that her bare feet knew so well and mine so poorly, I told her that she was safe with me, for the spirits had no power over a white man. She seemed to accept this, but I think she remembered it, not without a trace of malice, at a later time, when, the spirits having apparently punished me for some trespass, she said:

"It serves you right!"

Others told us that the dead rise at night and walk about the village, "in their habit as they lived," indistinguishable from the living, except as they are recognized for individuals who have long since departed this world. For that reason, the road that leads past the small and relatively new cemetery of Tepula is avoided at night. Nor, we gathered, is this return confined to the dead there interred, whose demise scarcely can antedate the last hurricane. The more ancient dead, it seems, arise from the sea and visit the scenes of their former life.

Surrounded by an atmosphere of such beliefs, one easily slips into the feeling that, after all, anything might be possible. In a spirit half serious, half humorous, I walked out, on a fine evening, down the forbidden street. Far to the left, toward the lagoon shore, lights gleamed through the trees from the houses clustered there. A brighter light moved - a torch fisherman, probably, emboldened by hunger to venture abroad at night. If so, he was the only torch fisherman I saw in my time on the island. The early moon cast dense black shadows on the white sand of the road; the forest on either side was dark, and its clumps of pandanus and tournefortia resembled not at all their daylight aspect. It was easy to understand how the mind of the native could populate that darkness with menacing shapes.

The cemetery, however, looked harmless enough: a bare, low-walled quadrangle, lately weeded and swept, in which the few graves, with their wooden crosses, their withered wreaths, seemed lost and lonely in the expanse of moonlight. I walked slowly past; no vampire figure arose. At the end of the road, I sat for a while on the stone curbing, looking out at the sea which rustled softly on the reef. It was a peaceful spot: one could be alone here with the sea and sky, the hard clean stony land, and whatever spirits might be awake.

The evening meeting would be over by now; the dance would be beginning at the house of Maukiri. I walked back slowly through the sand of the road, pausing to sit for a few minutes on the cemetery wall. Perhaps it was the moonlight, perhaps my Western unbelief-but the enclosure of the dead gave up no visible spirit, emitted no ghostly sound. I was to remember, with a question, that moonlight vigil when, long afterward, the *tahunga* shook his head, saying, "You have walked too near a grave." But that evening, as I slid down from the wall and continued my way toward the lighted houses, I thought only of Walter de la Mare's traveler who knocked at the moonlit door, and nobody answered; how, as he turned to go, "Tell them I came," he said, and how "the silence surged softly backward, when the plunging hoofs were gone."

11. My Education Begins

OUR VISITORS in that first bright morning, however, were no ghosts, but warm Tuamotuan flesh and blood. The plump, good-humored looking dancer of our first evening on the island appeared at our door, bearing an orange-red flower and a ripe tree-melon.

"I am Tauhoa, daughter of Paunu," she introduced herself, "and I am going to teach you the language."

With her were her sister Roki, the same who had played the harmonica for the initial dancing, and their cousin Tauria, a handsome young man who became my chief instructor.

It was he, indeed, who conducted us, on that night of low melon-colored moon and many stars, to the house of Maké, for the first of many evenings with a family who became among our dearest friends.

It was one of a group of houses belonging to members of this family; built, like ours, of coconut leaves, but smaller and still more primitive, with no foundation or platform, but set flat upon the ground. The door openings were closed with spare panels of leaves or old canoe boards.

Mats comprised the furniture. A few garments hung from a cord: a waistcloth, a dress of white cotton with round red spots the size of a dollar, a shawl obtained at some time from a ship. Fishhooks, knives and a few small implements were thrust into the thatch. The usual large locked chest stood in a corner - a chest, they told us, that had come originally from Hawaii.

The grounds, like other dooryards on the island, were bare of plant life - a clean expanse of sand and broken coral. At one side stood the bathing enclosure, a semicircle of loosely piled stones, high enough to conceal a person in a crouching position.

There is something esthetically satisfying, when one becomes accustomed to it, in the clean bareness of an east Tuamotuan dooryard. Swept clear of leaves, sticks and rubbish, and neatly sanded, it spreads beneath the palms, which cast bold patterns of shadow upon it under moon or sun. There is no clutter here, as there is little or none in Tuamotuan life; all is honest, unornamented, plain.

We sat in that dooryard, on mats laid over the crumbled coral, watching that melon-sliver of moon sink into the sea beyond Tepoto. There was singing; we, as guests, must contribute to the entertainment, so Keneti and I sang "Ahi Wela" and "Meleana," songs of Hawaii which these Polynesians could understand. Roki played the harmonica and Tauhoa danced, as she had danced the night of our arrival, but, in this comparative privacy, with more

abandon.

Maké, our chief hostess, was, by European standards, unattractive in appearance, but as comely of spirit as she was plain of physique. Rather above average height for a woman of that island, darker and with coarser features, she had an almost masculine aspect. As we grew to know her, however, her kindness and her bubbling sense of humor made for her, along with her cousins, a definite place in our regard.

Keneti strung the island's only guitar, dilapidated but still playable; and they sang the popular songs of the young people, inferior in poetic quality to the more ancient chants we heard later in memorable midnight sessions with the old people, but with a certain naïve charm. A single bar of melody was repeated, in descending scale, with minor variations, as words in what might be described as free verse were fitted to it. I never was able to distinguish the melody of one from another; there seemed to be but one basic tune, of which all others were slight modifications.

We learned many of them, for as our friends found us interested, they provided them in quantity. 'Write!' Roki would say, and dictate, while I lay prone by the smoking lantern and wrote on a scrap of copy-paper with a soft pencil. Then I must read aloud what I had written - often amid laughter as I made amusing errors or as the subject matter itself aroused the risibilities, for Maké and her cousins, in utmost good nature, were not above interpolating broad jests at our expense.

There must be a return for this hospitality. Our hostesses demanded that we teach them "the white men's dances." It was unfortunate, we reflected, that we, who appreciated so keenly the surviving simplicity and beauty of this island life, should be the ones to corrupt it thus. Yet we were under the obligation of Polynesian generosity: they were giving us their songs and dances; we must give them ours in return.

Most of them took to the fox trot readily enough, and a few learned to waltz. Only Roki, who learned with surprising ease, mastered the two step. Fangu, one of the cousins, to the end never could dance anything but a clumsy "toddle." In turn, they taught us the *hivinau*, and their male cousins initiated us into the vigorous and beautiful dance of the frigate-bird.

All of this dancing, after the first attempt, was done bare foot. We found the Japanese sandals, which we had adopted for wearing about the village, too clumsy for dancing on the uneven ground, and less protection from stones than we had hoped. The stones hurt our feet, but there was a patch of fairly smooth sand to which one could guide one's partner, and as the dancing continued night after night, our soles be came toughened.

Along with this, Tauria began my more formal education with the native numerals. These are no longer in common use, having been supplanted by the Tahitian; nevertheless, I must learn them first of all. Evidently the notion of "mental discipline" has its roots in the primitive.

"Count!" he would command, and others would join in: "*Arari, aiti, angeti*

.. " It spread through the village: men and women would stop me on the street to command, "Count!" and when we were visiting other parts of the island and sleeping among a row of natives, they would wake me in the night to recite that inescapable "Arari, aiti." In one such recital I stumbled over the word for "seven," pronouncing instead a word which is almost as improper there as its translation would be in more civilized communities. A great laughter went up; and thereafter as I passed through the streets, people would call out that inadvertent four-letter word to me, in laughing memory of that ridiculous error.

In return I taught Tauria the Hawaiian numerals, which could be of no more practical use to him than his obsolete Tuamotuan ones to me.

Gradually the older folk took up the task and, as I showed promise as a pupil, began to teach me the "root speech," which differs considerably from the Tahitian. Keneti's previous knowledge of Tahitian and Tuamotuan was, of course, an indispensable aid to me in these studies.

My education, however, was not confined to language or to Tauria's elementary arithmetic. Laboring with pencil and paper, my instructor produced a roster of those present, with the names of their fathers and grandfathers, supplying verb ally the relationships between them - relationships some of which, to my later sorrow, I never fully comprehended, important as they are in the island mind which is so precise in some respects, so lax in others. If some of my friends there were right, I could have saved myself much material pain b perceiving and remembering the blood relationship between Tauria and Temata.

Tauria also drew a rough map of the village, naming the various land districts, and the names and relationships of those who dwelt in each house.

The true name of this island," he informed us, "is Tepuka Maruia. 'Napuka' is a foreign name which means nothing in our language." And so on-

Geography, history, genealogy - this was to be a comprehensive course!

Tauhoa, though she soon gave over my general education to Tauria, tried patiently to teach me the making of ingenious and illustrative string-figures, but I, never skillful at such tricks, found it late to learn, and Tauhoa finally gave up in despair at the awkwardness of the foreigner.

These somewhat practical occupations were interrupted by recurrent demands for song and dance. In the course of the evening, Tukua, the chief's daughter - a stalwart lass of about sixteen years and of a peculiarly savage beauty - caused much amusement when in suddenly jumping up and running out of the place, her dress caught on a projecting bit of thatch and was torn off, exposing momentarily a sturdy but comely body. Tukua, much embarrassed, would not return inside the house, but lingered in the shadows without.

Those evenings at the house of Maké, and later at that of Paunu, near by, remain among the happiest memories of the island. Evening is lovely on the atoll: sand and pebbles white under moon or stars, between black shadows of

palm fronds; the sea lapping softly on the reef; around the doorway the low clang of a guitar and the skirl of the harmonica; soft, happy laughter, reed-thin singing. And later, perhaps, when the young people have stolen away to their mats under the stars, the low somber chanting of the old folk, intoned for ancestral spirits in the Great Darkness, a savage quavering song of ancient pagan things.

12. Pestilence

AS WE RETURNED from Maké's house, we heard a sneeze from one of the houses near by. The penalty of association with white people was being exacted. The islanders were sickening with colds.

Day by day more fell ill, until on Sunday the coughing and sneezing almost drowned out the service in the church. This gathering completed the spreading of the contagion, and by Monday practically the entire village was laid low with the *hota*, as they called the respiratory infection acquired from the white men.

We went abroad with a bottle of aspirin and a rubbing mixture. The chief and his wife, on whom we first called, were very ill. We prescribed aspirin and hot water, and his family heated a drinking-nut by embedding it in hot coals. From house to house we repeated this procedure and handed out little swabs made by twisting cotton around toothpicks and dipping them in medicated petroleum jelly. Everywhere people were blowing noses with a sonorous trumpeting which we never were able to imitate. The island is not supplied liberally with handkerchiefs, and the few that had been acquired for ornament were inadequate to the demands of this epidemic. Most of the people frankly blew the nose in the hand and hurled the discharge out through the open doorways. At least, we remarked, their aim was good. They never hit anybody.

At the time, we were anything but amused. These people, not accustomed as we are to colds, have not built up resistance; they suffer with them more than we, and there was danger that some might develop pneumonia.

"Dying," was the word everywhere, "dying with *hota*."

There was something ominous in the very word, for it was the same term that had been applied to the wartime influenza that decimated Tahiti.

In the house of Maké, Roki was making a valiant effort. Weak and feverish, she kept creeping to the door. Finally she seemed to have no energy left to rise up, but turned up a corner of the mat and spat under it.

"If we can still be fond of her after that," I commented in English, "it will be a tribute to her personality."

"The best of our civilized friends," Keneti reminded me, "get seasick."

A hot drink, made with juice from those limes I had carried so laboriously over the mountain of Meetia, and sugar from our supplies, with water from the well, relieved the patient.

Tauhoa, too, had a touch of the malady, but was up and about, taming a pig by leading it at the end of a strip of bark.

Maké, jesting even in illness, said she would die, and we must give her a big funeral. Thence arose a discussion as to whither she would go after death. Maké expressed the opinion, shivering with chills as she spoke, that it was better to go to a warm place; she feared heaven would be too cold.

There was debate in the village as to the source of the infection. Some were inclined at first to attribute it to our ship's arrival, but others pointed out that the *Islander* had been preceded a day or so earlier by one of the rare visits of the colonial government vessel, some of whose sailors had had colds. So our party was absolved.

This absolution was confirmed when we caught the infection, in turn, as was practically inevitable, the habits of the villagers being as they were.

Had I not already been coming down with it, I surely must have contracted it that Monday afternoon, when the children began to lose their shyness and gathered around me in the doorway while I amused them and at the same time practiced the language by trying to explain the pictures in our magazines.

The children from the first had been interested in us, but cautious, like young wild things. They would sit in our doorways, lovely in red loincloths against the smooth brown skin, combing one another's glossy dark or reddish-brown hair and inspecting it for lice, now and then snapping one up with the teeth - shy little girls, watching our every movement from great dark shining eyes, but turning away bashfully when we looked at them; and bolder little boys, chattering incessantly.

By this time, however, they had begun to doubt that the white men really would eat them, and the lure of the pictures brought them around me so closely that there was scarcely room to turn the pages. Little Riua, Kararo's youngest daughter, even sat confidently beside me, holding my hand in hers.

Tauria, who seemed already to have adopted us as kinsmen. was as much interested as the children, and commented intelligently on many things, including some he could never have seen. The young men and boys were especially taken with a cartoon of Primo Carnera, when I told them he was "the great fist-fighter." A pole vaulter puzzled them, but with the aid of some gestures from me, Tauria solved it with a native word meaning to dive or jump. A spark plug advertisement was an even more difficult problem. All I could tell them was that this object was "a thing inside an auto." Tauria's quick mind leaped to the Tahitian word for it. An automobile tire was another puzzle, when viewed detached from the vehicle, but when it was pointed out in another illustration showing a complete car, Tauria identified it as "rubber."

There were many questions, not all of which could be answered readily with a limited vocabulary, but the session seemed profitable for both sides.

The magazines were in great demand. Callers came every day to look at them and to take them home; and the circulation of several widely known American periodicals as extended to "readers" undreamed of by the publishers, as the worn copies made the rounds of the entire village.

Scenes of America and foreign countries, and of athletic sports, pleased

the men, and they never tired of being told that this view was in the country of the Chinese; this in Germany; and that one of icebergs and polar bears in "the cold country." Most cartoons, and reproductions of modern art, puzzled them; the only explanation they could fathom was that these were carvings like the crude sculptures of the ancient Polynesians - which, indeed, many of them resembled.

Pictures of women in slacks, riding-breeches or other semi masculine attire, and with short hair, also were a source of wonderment.

"Are these men or women?" our visitors would ask.

Dress fashions, however, were something the girls and women understood and in which they showed a keen interest. It was amusing to see two or three of them gathered around a style sheet, comparing it with their own simple knee-length dresses and discussing it in rapid Tuamotuan with eloquent gestures that left no doubt of the meaning, even to one un acquainted with most of the words.

"A tuck here and a yoke there - and see these gores and pleats ..."

Their first reaction to most of these styles was that they were "bad," as anything unfamiliar was likely to be, but interest soon overcame opposition to the new and strange. Our "savage" friends were not so different from their "civilized" sisters, after all.

During the week or more that the epidemic was at its height, we distributed magazines among the sick, and no doubt this simple form of amusement took their minds off their sufferings and contributed to their recovery. To our own great relief, all our "patients" got well, and, to our embarrassment, attributed their convalescence to our ministrations. We had, for some time thereafter, the dubious distinction of being great foreign medicine men, and every Tepukan who had a stomach-ache came to us for treatment.

Though we told them frankly that we had no skill in medical science, they were convinced, by the subsidence of the illness, that even if our protestations of ignorance were true, the white man's remedies were infallible, and we were besieged for many days with requests for medicine.

Fortunately, the ills of Tepuka are few and mostly trivial. Cuts and eel bites, and a run of minor digestive disturbances that followed the call of a schooner and the subsequent consumption of a quantity of wheat flour made up the bulk of our "practice."

I was sorry for the woman with toothache- - the only tooth ache on the island, for the people of Tepuka, unlike those of Tuamotuan lands that have been more in contact with foreigners and foreign food, have, as a rule, sound teeth. This woman was from another island. There was nothing lasting that we could do for her, but Keneti relieved the pain temporarily with a mild opiate applied to the cavity.

Babies with colic were an easier problem. We were able to convince the mothers that the white man's medicine was too strong for babies, and the

women seemed to believe us when we told them that if they would eat the food of the land and not the white man's food, their babies would be less likely to have trouble.

A case which distressed us for a time as much as that of the toothache was that of our landlord's blond grandchild. Maruia had been having earache, though she did not complain much, and we never heard her cry. Application of warm water relieved her, and apparently nature effected a cure, for after a few days we heard no more of the trouble.

Tu-tamahine, Kararo's handsome elder daughter, came to the house one morning, looking forlorn, and stating that she had had a stomach-ache for three days. Keneti and I held a consultation. He was for giving her castor oil, but I feared that in case her ailment was appendicitis, this treatment would do her more harm than good. We questioned her about her symptoms. In the course of this examination her mother Tangia, who was with her, revealed that she herself had suffered, in youth, from an ailment which, from her account of it, we concluded probably had been appendicitis. No, she had used no medicine. She had been very ill but her father, Temae, had cured her by sorcery.

Tu-tamahine's trouble, apparently, was merely indigestion from too much soggy bread. We compromised on a prescription of milk of magnesia, on the theory that it was comparatively harmless and might do her some good; advised her to eat papaya, drink much coconut water, and rest. This treatment apparently was effective, for in a few days Tu-tamahine was her old cheerful self. Temata, daughter of Maru, insisted upon treating her own wounds. Appearing one day with a broken toenail and a cut under it which had become infected, she opened it with a borrowed safety pin before I had a chance to sterilize the "instrument," and squeezed it out on a piece of paper. She also had a splinter driven deep into her heel. Borrowing a knife, she pared away the heel as a farrier pares a horse's hoof, then dug out the splinter with the same knife. It was a tribute to her constitution, or to the general healthfulness of the locality, that these injuries healed cleanly in a few days with out benefit of antiseptics.

As I was applying myself one afternoon to the backbreaking task of typing notes, sitting on a box, with the typewriter on another box, Teufi, one of the four old men of the village who were among our best friends, came in with a finger nearly severed by an unlucky sweep of his coconut knife in the construction of a new house for the chief - an elaborate structure a little way down the street.

As usual I was called in consultation, and we treated his injury with a simple antiseptic, hoping that nature would accomplish healing. At first our treatment seemed successful, but eventually the cure was completed by native methods a poultice, I think, of herbs.

My last "case" was that of a baby whom the mother brought to me, covered with a painful-looking rash. I dusted talcum powder upon it.

"Will he recover?" inquired the mother anxiously.

"He will recover," was my grave reply.

Luck was with us, apparently, for next day the rash had faded.

Our medical reputation suffered, to our relief, a severe blow when we drew the line at attempting to set a broken leg. There was an outcry in the street as men carried a boy from the beach. Women were wailing, and from a confused hubbub of talk emerged the information that Noere the younger had fallen over a canoe and broken his leg.

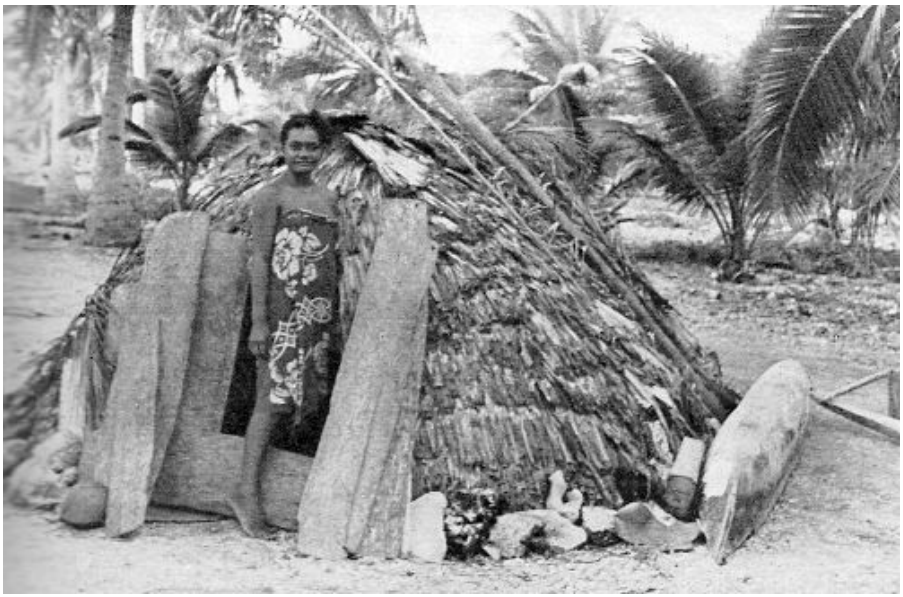
"It is broken in three places," the women said.

In his parents' house the boy lay, uncomplaining, on the mat. Toriu the tahunga came, and painted the limb with a reddish-brown liquid, the juices of two roots - a famous medicine of the island, whose virtues I was later to know very well.

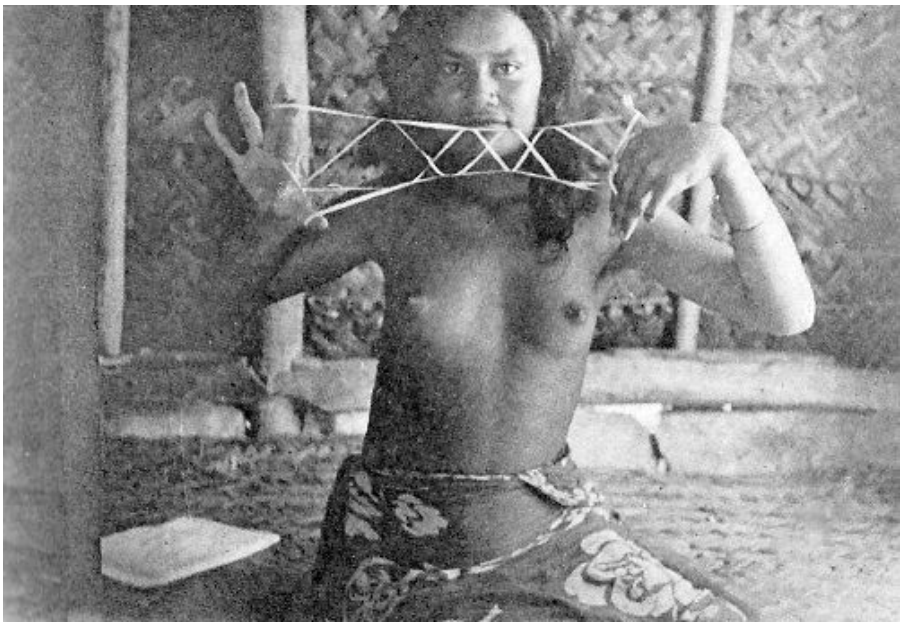
"Keep him quiet," this local practitioner directed. "He must not move the leg for ten days. Then he may walk, leaning on a stick. The bone will knit, and he will not be lame."

Indeed, within two weeks Noere was walking about, leaning on a rude crutch, and playing marbles with the other boys in the street.

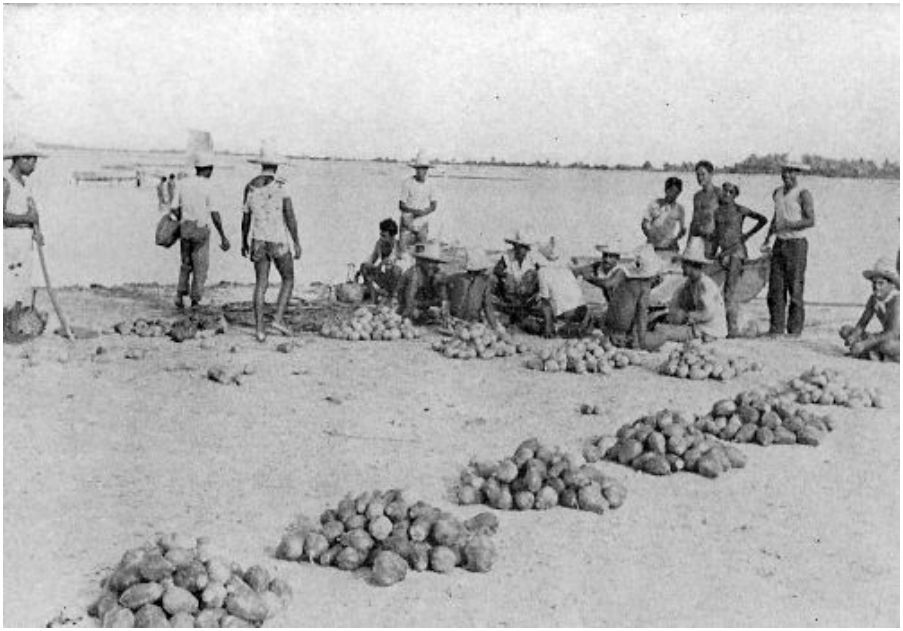
Teufi was, however, for a time quite convinced of our medical skill, or of the efficacy of the white man's drugs so much so that he inquired, one day, whether we had a medicine that would restore youthful vigor. It seemed Teufi, who was about seventy, had designs on certain of his women acquaintances. We were sorry to disappoint Teufi, but the best we could do for him was to advise him to eat eggs and drink plenty of coconut water. At least, that wouldn't hurt him.



Tukua, the chief's daughter, when not dressed up for special occasions, wears the more comfortable house-dress of island custom: two yards of red cotton cloth wrapped around her like a towel.



Tukua, in the cool gloom of Tiaki's house, was making string-figures as her companion chanted the legends which those intricate patterns of cord illustrate.



At mid-week, the young men of Tepuka Maruia brought the papaya harvest from the windward side, cruising across the lagoon in canoes under a mat sail, for communal distribution on the lagoon shore.

The island lies like a wreath upon the sea, its coral islets curving in a broken oval around it's many-colored lagoon.

13. Pillars of the Sacred Heart

THAT FIRST SNEEZING SUNDAY initiated the first period of consistent churchgoing that Keneti and I had experienced in some years. Practically everybody on the island went to church; if we were to maintain our standing in the community and avoid the implication of being what is called *teoteo*, a fairly accurate translation of which is "high hat," we must also attend at least the Sunday services.

The church of the Sacred Heart is of white coral, with large unglassed windows, a clean cement floor, and a steeple visible from as far away as the neighboring island of Tepoto, eleven or twelve miles to the west.

A great deal of work and - for these humbly circumstanced people - considerable expense, must have gone into the building, which is larger and more elaborate than the island needs. The pit in the coral whence the lime was taken still remains, a little way off, but the ground around the building is neatly swept.

The church was not in use during our visit, not having been consecrated as yet, and the village was without a priest. Father Amedee, who had labored in that field, had risen in the clerical ranks and become a bishop. Services were conducted in a coconut-leaf shed a little way from the stone building.

This temporary church was full that first Sunday when we arrived in white and wearing shoes in honor of the day - the men squatting on the right hand side, the women on the left, some of them holding babies. We joined the overflow sitting on coconuts outside. The service seemed interminable. Teuri the second chief read from the Scriptures and made some remarks of which I understood little, and Teroro-tu, wife of Tehau the gendarme, led the congregation in excruciating singing, mingled with the coughing and trumpeting of the stricken villagers.

It ended eventually, as all things do if one but waits, and the people filed gravely out and down the street to the assembly place at the intersection of the two main avenues: men in dungarees and tall hats; Teuri in his white coat; Tom the half-Chilean from Easter Island in his flat-crowned hat and dark jacket; the women in knee-length colored print dresses, high necked and long sleeved in deference to the church. The heavy, sharp breasts of Panitaka had burst through the worn material of her flimsy gown and protruded openly, but apparently caused her no embarrassment. She was wearing a dress; that was all that was necessary.

The gendarme, sitting on the low wall near the corner, received battered pieces of small change and written IOU's for the collection. The villagers sat

on the curbing or on coconuts under the trees, spreading a little way down both streets, while Teuri announced work on the roads that was planned for the coming week. After some desultory discussion, the meeting dispersed.

Most of it dispersed to our house, which apparently offered the only available Sunday afternoon diversion. Sunday, throughout the Tuamotu, is the one dull day. As work is forbidden, no fishing is done, the men having made an effort to catch enough on Saturday to last until Monday. The result is that they have nothing to do but sit about aimlessly, and fond of talk as they are, there is seldom enough fresh material on a small atoll for conversation to last an entire afternoon.

So for the first few Sundays the house was crowded as it had been the day of our arrival, with villagers looking at pictures in magazines, smoking, and asking questions. Tiring of this, after a time, we would close up the house and take refuge in the lagoon, or wander to some remote and little frequented part of the forest, returning later to work at our notes or to converse quietly and, to us, instructively, with a few of our friends.

Keneti and I were, I fear, suspect in the matter of religion. When asked as to the nature of his faith, he, having ascertained that Tepuka was a Catholic island, had replied that he was a Protestant, so as to avoid repetition of an incident that had embarrassed him on an earlier expedition to another island. Being less experienced at that time, he had allowed the natives to think he professed the same faith as themselves, and perceived the unwisdom of this course only when he found himself conducted in state by a pair of local dignitaries to the front of the church, where he was expected to take part in services with which he was unfamiliar. Since then, on Catholic islands he has announced himself as Protestant; on Protestant islands, as Catholic. How he solves the problem on an island divided among several faiths, as is Anaa, I never learned. Perhaps he avoids such islands.

For myself, I told my friends playfully that I was "heathen"; or, to tease Turina, wife of Ah Kui, I would say that I was a member of the "Chinese church." Turina, who was one of the more devout members of the Sacred Heart congregation, would shake her head and reprove me mildly, if withal affectionately, for this levity. She was fond of having me read to her from a Tahitian religious periodical that arrived many months after date of publication. Though I understood but imperfectly, I could read aloud more fluently than Turina could, and she would listen, gravely smiling, while I read to her of angels and spirits, of the beneficence of the True God, the sacrifice of "Ietu Kirito," and the enmity of "Tatani." Once, when I came to a passage in a letter from the bishop, in which he exhorted his followers to "smite the heathen," Turina's delight was manifest. Laughing, she raised a light brown hand and slapped me gently on the cheek, crying out in glee: "Smite the heathen!" - and immediately afterward, lest I be offended by this rough jest, affectionately pressed her small flat nose to my cheek.

If Turina was the most devout, Teuri was the most zealous. Borrowing one

of our long-suffering typewriters, he would sit up to all hours of the night, typing heavily with his fore finger, letter by letter, extracts from the Scriptures, which he would distribute to Turina and others to commit to memory.

For this activity he inquired whether we had a Bible. Keneti produced a copy of the Book. Kararo, always suspicious, asked whether it was "Catholic" or "Protestant." On being informed that it was a Protestant Bible, he snorted, in high disdain, that it was "full of lies."

Teuri, however, was of an inquiring mind. Overcoming his fear of the "devils" that might be concealed between its black covers, and crossing himself piously, he examined the book and later, having compared it with such portions of the Catholic version as were available, pronounced, in some puzzlement, the two to be virtually the same.

I could not generate within myself any enthusiasm for the Sunday service, and neither of us ever attempted to attend those held during the week. We fell into the habit of going to church later and later until one Sunday, delayed longer than usual by drying photograph films, we arrived, wearing newly made hats, just as the congregation was leaving. The reputation of the Tuamotuan, according to some accounts, as being saturnine and unmirthful, was not borne out on this occasion. The villagers greeted us with unconcealed amusement and with piquant comments at our expense. Teingo, wife of the chief, ran and knelt before us in mock pantomime. Here, she implied, somewhat irreverently, were angelic visitors!

The next Sunday Keneti, who had been more severely called to account by his friends than had I, for whom the seemed to have lost all hope, went to the Sacred Heart very early. I remained at the house to guard the films; parried the onslaughts of children seeking onions; traded one to a daughter of Teuri for an egg. Then I drew on my near-white trousers which had been washed for me on Saturday, and walked across backyards, so as to be as inconspicuous as possible, toward the church.

I was not, however, to evade the keen eyes of the villagers. Temata á Maru, who, I had observed, was not altogether regular in attendance herself, and always sat outside, hailed me from her seat under a coconut tree.

"Where are you going?"

"To church," I replied virtuously.

"It is over," she taunted. "Bad man!" she called after me as I took refuge behind the new house that had been built for the absent missionary. I waited till the crowd had emerged, then moved out in as dignified and unconcerned a manner as possible to join the procession, but this transparent ruse did not deceive the parishioners.

After that, I gave up attendance entirely, and let Keneti uphold the devotional honor of our household.

I was unable to detect what influence, if any, religion had on daily life. Perhaps it had softened the savage ways of the islanders, as described in old

accounts; though our informants in the village told us that the violence that had characterized many of the islands had never been true of Tepuka. Nor could the church be charged with having done the islanders any great harm. It had substituted a new set of ceremonies for the old, and provided a community gathering place and a reason for assembling. The singing, and participation in the service, gave them a mode of social expression to replace, in a way, the old pagan rites. Beyond that, it did not seem greatly to affect their life. For the most part, they kept, as they probably had done before they were "converted," all the commandments save, in its broad interpretation, one - and that one was so foreign to their rooted custom that it surely could have no meaning for them.

After one of those religious discussions with the serious minded Teuri, we went out and across the street to the house of Te Uru te Po, one of the old men of the village whose memory runs back beyond the time of the church and the black-robed priests. Te Uru te Po, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, was squatting beside his fire of coconut husks, broiling a fish on hot stones.

"I am not of this age," he said. "I am of the heathen time. I have eaten the turtle on the marae."

"What was life like in the heathen time?"

"It was very good," he replied. "There was no fuss about going to church. One day was like another. We wore the loincloth and the wrap of matting; the women did not spend their time washing and ironing clothes, as they do now. If people fell ill, there was no nonsense about foreign medicines. They got well, or they died. We did not pray, except to the ancestors for food."

"Tell us, Te Uru te Po, which was better, the ancient time or the new time?"

Te Uru te Po looked out toward the sea from eyes blue with age.

"The men of Tepuka have not learned to lie," he said. "The heathen time was better .... We had no Sunday then!"

"The food of the island is good food," said Te Uru te Po as he and his family gathered around the evening meal in his coral-strewn dooryard at Tepuka Matuia.

"The heathen time was better," said Te Urute Po, as he demonstrated the use of the digging-stick, Tepuka's only agricultural implement.

14. "Kawkaw"

"WE SHALL HAVE," said Keneti, the third week of our stay, "to ration our cigarettes."

For our position in the community at that time seemed to be first as objects of curiosity and second as a source of free tobacco.

The word for it is written, in Tuamotuan, *kavakava*, and pronounced, in the Tepuka dialect, *kawkaw*. It was the word we heard oftenest during our stay. Though the Polynesians did not know tobacco until the white man brought it, they took to it readily from the time of the first voyagers. Of the people of Tepuka, I knew only three who did not smoke.

Our American cigarettes were a novelty, and though the islanders insisted they did not like them as well as their own tongue-biting varieties, they never neglected an opportunity to consume ours - on one occasion when, out of curiosity, I kept count, more than two hundred in a day.

Callers in our house received them as a matter of courtesy, but people merely passing by would come to the doorway and ask, or meeting us in the street, would bring up the familiar subject. Even the children would scramble, like chickens after corn, for discarded glowing "butts." Every where we went we heard: "*Kawkaw*!"

The "native" tobacco, which is not really native in the Tuamotu but brought from Tahiti in the copra schooners, is of two kinds. Most in favor at Tepuka is "kavakava Tahiti," a heavy, black, evil-smelling twist of leaf tobacco, tightly pressed into a hard cake and rolled in coconut leaves, forming a bar a yard or so long, which is chopped off in lengths and sold by weight. Thirty cents buys about a pound.

Leaves are peeled off the roll and carried about in empty match boxes, with a supply of the papery inner surface of a dried pandanus leaf. A bit of tobacco is spread out and dried over the flame of a match or of a small brand from a fire; then rolled tightly in a spiral of leaf and ignited while held not in the mouth but in the hand. I never mastered the natives' trick of pushing the fire down into the cigarette with a finger, or, except when very skillfully rolled, the art of keeping it lit at all.

This Tahiti tobacco has the advantage of economy: a little of it goes a long way - though this advantage is somewhat offset by the number of matches it consumes, for even the natives' cigarettes are continually going out. A native, however, rarely smokes one all the way down at a sitting, though they are small - mere wisps of tobacco in a slender roll of leaf. He will smoke a few puffs, then hand the cigarette on to a friend, or deposit it behind an ear for

future use.

The burning tobacco mingles with the fragrance of the burning pandanus leaf to make a heavy but not unpleasant odor, as of incense. Nor does it taste as vile as, in the raw state, it smells, but if smoked in quantity it rasps the throat.

The more fastidious preferred a long, stringy shag or birds-eye, which comes in little paper packages of astounding ugliness, put up in Holland, and at Tepuka is called "Samasón," from the circumstance that the brand imported by Ah Kui the storekeeper is "Samson."

Half a franc buys a package of French cigarette papers, but the Samasón is also often rolled in pandanus leaf, which costs only the trouble of gathering it, though the feat of coiling the spiral around the loose cornsilk-like shag is even more difficult than with the sour and villainous "twist."

Our native friends couldn't understand our hoarding. We had either to dispense cigarettes freely or say that the supply was exhausted, which they wouldn't believe. Were not all white men fabulously wealthy, and was not our borrowed house stacked high with boxes of all kinds of luxuries? If we tried to plead poverty in tobacco, we were but miserly. However, the cigarettes would soon be gone unless we contrived some way of easing the draft upon them. If, as they professed they liked Tahiti twist better, why not give it to them? So I went out to Ah Kui's meager little store and laid in a supply, peeled off the leaves, dried them and laid them out in a large coconut shell in our one-room house. But we must also have wrappers. So I gathered dead leaves from a large pandanus tree that stood near Maono's house, and prepared to receive company.

Tangia was the first to appear.

"The Tahiti tobacco," I quoted, "is better than the American cigarettes."

She was pleased with the tobacco, but laughed long over the wrapper, which, it seemed, was not the right kind. She returned to her house and brought a long leaf, at the proper stage of maturity, showing me how to separate the papery portion and strip it from the less flexible parts.

Temata, passing by with her jaunty stride, looked in while this was going on.

"Come with me," she said, "and gather some good wrappers."

She led the way over heaped cobble-like broken coral, which at that time still cruelly hurt my unaccustomed feet, to the great pandanus tree near a ruined marae, This tree had not been picked clean of leaves suitable for the purpose as had the one I had tried, nearer the village. From that time the problem was solved, until Ah Kui ran short of both kinds of tobacco soon after which our relief boat arrived from Tahiti, bringing large quantities of shag.

Tukua, the chief's daughter, revealed a greedy side of her otherwise amiable nature, in respect to this adopted luxury. We were fond of Tukua, but after she had several times, when a cigarette was offered her, taken the whole

package, for the sake of our other guests we had to declare an embargo on smokes for her.

It lasted but a few days. Falling asleep after supper following a strenuous excursion into the lagoon for shellfish, the story of which will be told in its place, I was awakened by a voice at the door, calling my name softly: "Pari!" Tukua and her cousin were on their way to the community song practice. Tukua came up to me very gently, with a timid and sorrowful look in her large eyes.

"Greet me!" she pleaded.

I hadn't really wanted to be angry with Tukua, and this overture of friendship disarmed me completely. Granting her request, I buried my nose in her neck, in the Polynesian gesture of greeting. She put her arms around me and laid her head on my shoulder - a head smelling faintly of perfumed coconut oil and very clean and sweet.

So American-made cigarettes gave way to Tahitian twist, and that in turn to shag, but I seldom think of Tepuka with out a reminiscent imaginary whiff of the slow-coiling, incense-like smoke of strong black leaf in pandanus wrapping, or without hearing an echo of the otherwise usually fairly melodious voices of my friends and neighbors in their one raucous phrase:

"*Kawkaw*."

15. Harvest

"WE ARE GOING," said Tauria, "to the windward islets to get papaya."

Tauria and Tupu, having volunteered, with others, for the weekly harvest of the tree melon which, after the coconut, is Tepuka's principal fruit crop, were inviting me to accompany them on the overnight excursion to the opposite end of the lagoon from the site of the present village. There, in deeper and more fertile, if sandy, soil, the seeds of Carica papaya (known perhaps to some readers as papaw) had been planted - not without, one may suspect, a regard for strategic location, the fields being as far as one could possibly get from the haunts of the children, who, in the Tuamotu, are much like children anywhere else in respect to fruits of the forest and field.

"These expeditions," Teuri explained, "are voluntary, though in the long run everybody is expected to do his share. The groups go forth, making a picnic of it, and living on the land as they go. They may eat all they want of the fruits of the land while on the expedition, but may not carry away anything except the harvest which is the purpose of the trip and which is divided equally among the villagers."

The canoe lay under the trees near the lagoon shore: one of the larger boats built of planks in the Tahitian fashion, painted light blue and bearing the name *Marama*. Tupu, Tauria, Tetauru and I hoisted it on our shoulders and carried it over the beach flats to the water. Two women and two or three boys joined the party. One of the women sat on the narrow bench with me, looking up with large soft eyes and conversing as much as my small vocabulary would permit. She seemed pleased when I told her that her name was the same as that of a former princess of Hawaii, in the Hawaiian language, Kinau.

"Your skin is hot," she exclaimed, touching my hand, and then put her hands up to my face to see whether my cheeks, too, were "feverish." The skin of a white man seems so to a native, and the native skin cool to us. Some difference in texture and hence in radiation, in response to centuries of climatic influence, must account for it.

Other canoes hailed us as we set out over the lagoon. Tauria pointed out and named the "lands" as we passed them: the wells, the sacred places and assembly grounds. Once, pointing to a sandy islet where, beneath an overgrowth of shrubbery, lay the stones of an ancient temple, he remarked: "*Te ariki no Tepuka Maruia, ko Mokio-ariki*."

Misunderstanding, I thought at the time that this was the name of a land district, and it is so written in the faded, water-spattered list I brought home from that voyage, but now I know that he was saying: "The chief of Tepuka

Maruia, Mokio-arilki," and pointing out some land as associated with the memory of that famous chief, his ancestor, who was to become, by adoption, mine as well.

The canoe drew up on the sands of a place called Mahora, and we waded in through the shallows. Men who had arrived before us were spreading copra on the ground to dry, and women came to take my hand and accept cigarettes.

Tauria and Tupu led the way to a small glade in the forest, denser here than on the village side of the atoll. They pulled down drinking-nuts with a hooked pole, husked them on a sharpened stake, and cracked off the ends of the shells with a large knife. Tauria brought me some of the orange-colored fleshy phalanges of a pandanus fruit, larger and sweeter than that of Hawaii, though somewhat fibrous in texture.

The women passengers remained at Mahora when were embarked. I took up a spare paddle and used it as I had learned to do in the canoes of Waikiki. The Tepuka paddles are easier to wield; they are shorter and lighter, with a longer and narrower blade, the older ones curved backward to slip more easily through the water. There was one such curved paddle in the *Marama*. Carved roughly on its surface was its name: "Hupiaparakau."

"You paddle well," praised Tauria, in surprise that the white man knew this native art. "Where did you learn?"

As we moved on over the smooth water, a large bird flew overhead, gleaming in the sunlight with a greenish sheen.

Tauria identified it as a "havana."

"Do you hunt these birds?"

"Yes, with nets and with traps."

Tauria guided the canoe toward a coral shoal and grounded its outrigger upon the rock. Tupu donned goggles and dived with his spear, swimming about and peering under ledges, seeking fish. Resuming our journey, we drew into an inner lagoon and landed at a more heavily wooded portion of the island than I had yet seen.

Several houses stood along the curving shore, and a thatched church, with a fragment of a bell hanging by a cord from a tree.

The papaya plantation stands in the midst of the forest, some way back from the houses. The trees grow thickly, as if the seed had been sown broadcast, making a dense grove. Despite this crowding, they were loaded with fruit in all stages of growth. Coconuts and pandanus grew among them, and squash vines twined beneath. Tauria even pointed out proudly a single pineapple, stunted but struggling bravely, in the meager soil, surrounded by a ring of rusty iron - the islanders' crude attempt at soil chemistry.

The young men shook down papayas and ate them as we passed through the grove, breaking down branches and whole trees with no apparent compunction, so plentifully does this untended crop flourish. Half a dozen men were sitting around a pile of the fruit in a small clearing. They greeted us heartily, and asked to be photographed with the harvest. With the big knives

they all carry, they were peeling the melon-like fruit and eating them like apples, or, more frequently, cutting off the end and sucking the pulp, like an orange. Tauria ate half a dozen or more while we lingered there.

More drinking-nuts were produced. Tauria led us back through the maze to the shore, stopping to point out one of the few survivors of the forest of puka (Pisonia grandis) trees which must originally have given the island its name. The puka is a large tree to grow in this soil and on this small island - a tree with a thick trunk and spreading branches; as old Teufi told us later, a sacred tree. Even the somewhat gnarled specimen that spiraled skyward from the midst of the fruit garden had a dignity from which one could realize the impressiveness of the forest in olden times, when such trees covered the land.

Men were eating on a beautiful curving beach. Somebody spread a large leaf as my plate, and laid upon it a broad slice of raw parrot-fish. Heaps of food stood everywhere: fish of half a dozen kinds, coconuts, papaya. Mindful of Polynesian proprieties, I passed out crackers and chocolate, which vanished quickly among these voracious eaters, and tobacco.

Tupu led me to a shed, behind the main group of houses, and showed me a canoe of the old Tuamotuan type - deep and narrow, made of planks of tou (Cordia subcordata) wood sewn together with coconut fibers. This was the last of the old Tuamotuan ships on this island. The great trees are few now; the coconut has been planted over the land; foreign fashions have entered. The canoes in which the men of Tepuka voyage to Tepoto and across the lagoon of their own island are built in the Tahitian manner, and held together with nails. But the old *pahi* stands in its leaky shed, still sound after many years, a monument to the past of a seafaring people.

The windward side, my companions said, was anciently inhabited permanently, and was then politically independent of the northwestern half of the island. All coconuts drifting ashore on one side of a certain midway point belonged to one nation, and those drifting beyond it, to another. In the course of time, the clans had intermarried and finally merged, and with the coming of ships and such little trade as these brought, the permanent village was established near the ship landing. At certain seasons, however, a large part of the population moves to that part of the island and lives mere for several weeks or months, harvesting copra.

Men came in from the lagoon, with octopus hanging from their spears like moss from the trees of a cypress swamp. With a spade made of turtle bone lashed to a pole, a shallow oven was dug in the pebbly ground, and fire made therein; the squid were laid on a flat stone and beaten with a club to soften the tough flesh, then wrapped in fern leaves and laid in the earth oven, covered over with leaves and small stones. Fish, fruit and coconuts completed the meal, as before. I contributed a tin of corned beef.

The amount of food consumed was tremendous. Tauria alone must have eaten, if computed at American café prices for comparable dishes, five dollars' worth, and Tupu devoured even more than he. No one seemed to mind the

flies that clustered thickly over everything. We ate with our fingers and washed them in the lagoon; hurled away the smeared leaf-platters, then lay on the mats and smoked. Tupu pointed out some houses farther down the beach:

"Let us go to the house and sleep."

As we started, a shout went up from the boys: "Keneti! Keneti!" - and indeed, there was Kenneth, coming down the shore with Tauria. He had waded across the shallow passes and walked around the rim of the atoll to join us. His arrival was the occasion for another meal, carried in a turtle shell to the beach in front of the sleeping-houses.

There was much talking, as we lay on the mats in the cool evening: talk of the old times and the new; of Tepuka and of the world that to these island fishermen is but a dream world far away at the very edge of the earth, a country less real to them than the dark world of the Polynesian dead, and known to them only vaguely and at second and third hand through the tales of men who have been away to sea, as "the white men's country." They were eager to know of this world outside, especially of the Land of the Burning Mountains, whence we had come. Question and answer shuttled back and forth, of their country and of ours.

"No, the people of Tepuka Maruia did not eat the flesh of men. Nor did they sacrifice human lives to the gods. The gods of our people were our own ancestors; they ate fish and turtle, as do we ourselves. Nor was there fighting in our country. We are all of one kin. The four clans dwelt together in peace. The spears were for fish. The men fought only with their mouths. It was not necessary to waste the blood of the land. . . .

"But tell us, is it true, as we have heard men say, that in Hawaii there are mountains higher than the coconut trees?"

It is indeed true. We ourselves have climbed those mountains, and upon them we have walked in clouds."

"It must then be true. It is indeed marvelous. We should like to see such a country, though it must be a grievous thing to do so much climbing, and a great danger to live in a country that stands on end."

With pardonable curiosity they inquired about the work of the scientists and the purpose of their activities, and listened attentively as Keneti explained: how the distribution of land shells, which cannot swim the seas, may throw light on the ancient geography of the Pacific and the possible whereabouts of the ancestral Havaiki of native lore; how the botanist's study of plants may aid in tracing the migrations of the Polynesians; how research among insects may reveal new ways of combating pests that harm the American crops of sugar and pineapples in Hawaii, and, again, how his own study of ethnology preserves the ancient wisdom that is fast crumbling away.

Despite their narrow experience of geography and of other matters familiar to the white man, these men showed an understanding that transcended their actual knowledge - this and, with it, a deep respect for science.

"It is a profound study," they commented.

I fell asleep on the mat under the moon, as the conversation was still rambling on. Tupu awakened me and showed me to the sleeping-house, a fairly large structure of the usual construction, with a few poles, spears and bird nets hanging up, and other odds and ends.

"Birds are hunted with these nets at night," said Tupu. "Some time we shall hunt them together."

I stretched out on the mat, between Keneti and one of our hosts, with my ragged sweater for warmth - since there was no cover - and my head on the log over which the end of the mat was rolled. It was not an altogether restful night; the wooden pillow of the Tuamotuans induces stiffness in an unaccustomed neck; the wind blew cold from the sea in the early morning, with a squall of rain that sifted through the open door; and the dozen or more men who shared the house for the night were wakeful and talkative.

We were up at dawn, breakfasted frugally on papayas, coconuts and what was left of my chocolate, and proceeded to the serious business of harvesting. Piles of fruit were collected in the grove; the men and boys wove large temporary baskets of coconut fronds, and, two by two, carried them on poles to the canoes.

The mats on which we had slept were tied to spear shafts, making square sails supported by a mast and a diagonal boom attached to the mast at the base and manipulated from the stern by cords attached to small sticks tied into the upper and lower corners of the mat.

The heavily loaded canoes sailed gently, shipping water constantly over the low gunwales, to nobody's apparent concern. I bailed with a coconut shell, until relieved by one of the boys. Another steered with a paddle. We sailed straight across the lagoon, making the return voyage in much shorter time than the trip over.

One of the small boys climbed out on a shell-mound islet, half a mile or so from port, and we left him there - perhaps to pick up shellfish. Nobody worried about him. After all, the lagoon was only his front yard; when he had finished whatever business took him there, he would swim and wade back, walking barefoot over the sharp shells.

Other canoes were there before us when we landed at the lagoon beach near the village; a crowd had assembled and the papayas were being divided. Women and children were wading through the shallows to the temporary mooring places of the canoes, with baskets on poles, and carrying the fruit to shore. There they laid the papayas one by one in eight piles of ripe and eight of unripe fruit. Each pair of heaps represented twenty-four people. When those heaps were completed, they were subdivided into smaller ones, each for four people, thus arriving at an average of four ripe and four green papayas for each person.

Some of the softer fruit, crushed under the load in the canoe, were eaten at once and not counted in the communal distribution. It was a lively scene at the

lagoon edge: the women, with garments tucked up around their hips, wading to and fro with baskets of yellow fruit; the men in shorts and tall hats carrying the unloaded canoes on their shoulders to the shade at the edge of the forest; the children running about, their faces smeared with the orange-yellow flesh of the papayas, eating an incredible number of the smaller and softer ones; old folk squatting beside their baskets, awaiting completion of the division - and all keeping up a continuous chatter, with much laughing and jesting.

When the last subdivision had been made, representatives of the various households gathered up their shares in baskets and trooped away homeward. A special basketful was laid aside for us visitors; Tehau offered us in addition a share of his, and our landlord somewhat tardily brought forward those which it was his duty, in island courtesy, to provide. We thus had more than we could eat in the few days they would keep, but the always hungry children who crowded about our doors could relieve us of any surplus.

The people greeted us, as we stepped ashore and walked through the village, as if we had been on a long journey, instead of a matter of five miles - as, indeed, we had been to the farthest limit of that ring of coral which, except for twelve-miles-away Tepoto, is for most of them the world. Citizen after citizen stopped to clasp our hands, and our friends at Maké's house pressed their noses to our cheeks, when Tupu conducted us there to the evening's social gathering.

The singing and dancing on the pebbled space was a soothing, gentle relaxation in the shadowy cool of evening; and, afterward, rest was deep upon the mats laid on our coral floor. This was home; these were our friends; the stars over Tepuka Maruia were kind.

But within the next few hours, a calamity of sorts was to fall.

16. A Chief Takes Leave of His People

THE NEXT DAY there was shouting and running to and fro, for a ship had been sighted. The flag was planted on the shore, and we joined the crowd that trooped to the "harbor" to view the arrival. She was a copra schooner from Papeete, on her last trip, as we learned, the Chinese company that owned her having fallen into difficulties.

We looked upon this, the first vessel to call during our sojourn, with mixed feelings. She might bring mail - though, as developed, she brought none for us; we might send mail out by her, and did; but obscurely we rather resented the intrusion of this craft from outside upon the peace of our island world.

Two weevily-looking Chinese came ashore in a whaleboat and walked, followed by a small crowd, to the store of Ah Kui and Ah Siun. Men began carrying copra to the landing, in sacks of two hundred to three hundred pounds each, on their shoulders. I photographed Rangina in the act of bearing one of these loads the half-mile length of the village. Grinning, he stopped to chat and take a cigarette, without setting down the burden. Later I saw Tanerairua carrying not one but three sacks of copra with as apparent ease.

Loading, and such other, business as they had, including the ordering of meager stock for the store, took all day, as the schooner stood off the island. One by one the sacks were carried to the beach and boat loads rowed to the ship.

But the *Rahatu* had brought something more than goods to exchange for copra. She had brought the most extraordinary news that had reached the island in many years - precipitating an event that assumed, to the islanders, almost world-shaking importance.

"Maono is summoned to Tahiti!" the word ran through the streets.

The chief himself confirmed this. He had received a summons to the colonial capital to answer, as we then understood, questions regarding his administration.

The villagers discussed the matter at a special meeting in the street. Ordinarily the village meeting is held on Sunday after church, when work is planned for the coming week, grievances aired and adjusted, and official announcements made. But this was an emergency, Maono having decided that he must go at once, by the same ship that 'had brought the call. There might not be another schooner for months.

Talking with various natives, we learned something of the background of the case. The island, a few years earlier, had harbored a criminal of unusual

anti-social activity, for this peaceful place. After this man had been convicted and fined for robbing the store, the store had burned. He had been convicted of that crime as well, and was serving a term in prison at Papeete. He had complained that he had not had a fair trial, and had obtained a rehearing, at which Maono was now called to testify.

It was feared, however, that the vengeful convict might bring charges which would place the chief in an embarrassing position. Like many another native executive in these islands where a foreign system of government has been implanted upon the simpler native organization, Maono could give no account of the few dollars that had been collected in fines, or otherwise, for the district treasury. The money was gone. If he, as chief, had spent it, this was understood as a matter of course by his fellow-citizens, for was he not their chief, and as such, entitled to any proceeds of government? But the colonial officials, with their different notions of responsible administration, might take an attitude that would be awkward for the chief. It was even possible that he himself might become a prisoner.

We discussed this possibility with the villagers. What would happen if Maono were convicted of embezzlement and kept in prison at Papeete?

That would not be allowed to happen, they said. If Maono were found guilty, he would be fined, or sentenced to imprisonment if unable to pay. The people of his island would levy upon themselves a special assessment to pay Maono's fine. They would not permit their chief to go to the "Iron House."

They saw nothing illogical in this. Maono was "the father of the land" and they loved him; apparently he was in trouble, or in danger of it, from the workings of the strange ways of the white men; that was his misfortune, and the misfortune of his fellow-citizens. It was all very stupid, they thought: Maono had governed wisely and well; the people had enough to eat; the roads and grounds were neatly kept; everybody at Tepuka and Tepoto was satisfied with his administration.

For Maono had arisen, it seemed, partly by birth and partly by natural ability to the position recognized by the colonial authorities who had appointed him "president of the district council." It was said he had derived his knowledge of tradition and his spiritual power, known to natives and scientists as *mana*, in part from having slept for a week on the grave of his father, who had been noted for these things.

Hence something of the sacredness of chiefs of olden time clung to this modern local governor. This barefoot man in shabby foreign clothes, with whom we spoke day by day, was in touch with divine powers and himself regarded as a little beyond the human.

"When Maono embarks in his canoe for Tepoto," Teuri informed us, "the sky all around the horizon darkens, and the people of Tepoto know that the chief is on the way to them. I myself have seen this."

He was, Teuri added, one of two or three whose wisdom entitled them to the designation of tahunga, which connotes in the native mind all that is

represented, for the white man, by science, theology and the learned professions. He was one of two qualified to perform the ceremony equivalent to circumcision for the boys of his people.

Maono himself said he did not mind any charges that might be brought, or the possibility of going to jail, but that he was grieved at having to be absent from his country and his people. He had never been away from his native islands before. He would return as soon as possible; meanwhile he would leave the government in the hands of Teuri, the second chief, and trusted that affairs would go smoothly.

Nor did he forget us.

"These two white men," he said at the meeting, "Keneti and Pari, are good men who are here for a good purpose. Treat them as my sons."

Maono's fondness for us was influenced somewhat, no doubt, by Kenei's gift of a bag of rice for his family and a handful of Banque d'Indo-Chine notes for the journey, but I am sure he really liked us, and the esteem was mutual. I also earned his particular regard by putting in working order, with parts out of my own reserves, an electric torch which he brought to me minus a battery and with a burned-out bulb - a small service for which he was touchingly grateful.

Maono instructed his eldest son to take over the duty of supplying us with drinking-nuts and occasional gifts of eggs, and to see that we had our share of the communal fruits of the land. As Maono the Younger walked home with the bag of rice, the always curious Kararo asked where he got it.

"From my papa, Keneti," he responded.

"Papa," in Tuamotuan parlance, means any male relative.

When we went to Maono's house to bid him good-by, the chief was dressed for departure as we had seen him the day of our arrival: the soiled helmet, the striped trousers, rolled to the knees for wading on the reef, plus a faded khaki coat.

The chief's house was one of the least pretentious: a coco nut-leaf structure, small for his numerous family, and some what in disrepair. Near it stood a new house which was being built for him: a combined city hall, governor's mansion and court house. This was to be the most elaborate structure, after the church, in the two islands: it was more than twice as large and high as any other house and was to have a broad and high stone platform before it, where the chief might hold court and meet and address his people. Its walls were of no common weave, but of squares of coconut midrib laid diagonally in patterns, and nailed, instead of tied, upon the frame. In a few years the nails would rust and fall out, and the chief's house crumble away, but such was the impression some foreign things had made, that the natives preferred nails to the better and more durable ancient lashings of coconut fiber.

The villagers gathered near the shore, where the constable and the second chief had planted the pole and run up the flag. A group of girls sang

plaintively a hastily rehearsed farewell song. "The land," they sang, "is left fatherless."

Nearly all were weeping, as their voices rose mournfully amid the sound of surf and the rustling of fronds. Facing them, under the flag, stood Maono, flanked by Tehau in the red-braided cap of civil authority and Teuri in a ceremonial white coat - all with heads bared and bowed, as if praying.

When the singing had ended, Maono spoke slowly, in a low voice, repeating some of his remarks at the village meeting and expanding them. This is substantially what he said, and I set it down as a notable document, as worthy of preservation, in its way, as the Gettysburg Address:

"My children: the waves are shimmering in the sun, and the air above this ancient holy place of Rangihoa vibrates with the noon. I stand here, where, in the former time, our fathers met to honor their gods, and look upon this land, my own country.

"My children, I must go on a far journey. I do not know what may await me there. My bowels are heavy - not for the voyage, or for the dangers of wind and sea, but that I leave my people and the land.

"I speak to you now from the store of ancient wisdom, from the Foundations. The old learning has not vanished utterly; though we no longer know all of the hidden meaning, a little lingers in the minds of the old men. But it is fading fast: the young people, lured away by foreign things, are slow to learn, and the old perish away. We few who know will soon be gone, and all these things will fade into the night, as water sinks in sand.

"Therefore, my children, I speak this to you from my deepest bowels: Among us are these two men from the white men's country: Keneti and Pari, men learned in the foreign wisdom, and in the use of the Thing-that-strikes-the-paper as-it-writes. They have come here to seek the native wisdom while it still remains, and to keep it for the long time yet to come, so that the children of our children may turn to it at last, when we are gone and our breath has vanished with us.

"I declare now before you, all my people, these men Keneti and Pari are my sons. Give them therefore the ancient knowledge! Hold nothing back; give it fully and freely, lest it be lost in the whirl of changing times. I charge you with this duty, now that I shall not be here to give these new sons of mine this teaching.

"This is enough of words. I must go now. The path is dark before me; you remain. Life be to you, my children, in God! The ship awaits. Life be to you all in God! I go."

It was another strange picture of mingled civilization and primitive life: the villagers in their best clothes; the great tricolor flapping in the wind under a sun that made a white glare on the sand; the palms behind them and the white steeple of the Sacred Heart thrusting above the trees where the ancestral stones of the temple enclosure once had stood; the dark, grave faces, and the low, slow words of Maono, in the ancient language of those ancestors who

had eaten the turtle on this spot and shared it with the gods.

Keneti and I, despite the chief's reference to us, had no part in this. For the moment, we were forgotten. We stood on the outer edges of the gathering, observing the scenes of a Polynesian leave-taking.

Maono made a brief formal transfer of his authority to Teuri and, followed by the men and women of his immediate family, walked across the glaring sands to the reef where the whaleboat lay. Sailors lined up on either side to launch the boat into the waves. Men took leave of Maono and his traveling-companion, burying their faces in his neck or side, holding the pose while Maono stood stiffly, gazing over their heads.

Teingo, his wife, shrieked and lamented shrilly, and would have fallen on the ground had not two relatives supported her. They bore her, still wailing, to a place under a tree at a little distance.

Maono and Maehanga the Younger stepped into the boat and were rowed away to meet their uncertain fate.

We returned sadly to the village, sharing with its citizens the grief and anxiety they felt for their chief, who in that short time had become dear to us as well. The *Ruahatu* spread sail and disappeared slowly in the horizon. The people resumed their daily tasks. Hei and Tuata no doubt began that very day composing the first of that series of "hymns" which were to be sung almost nightly, in preparation for the chief's return.

Keneti and I were more anxious than we were willing to admit. We had liked Maono since the first sight of his friendly, open countenance. We feared he would be helpless in Papeete and become entangled in legal procedure that would bewilder him still further. That uncertainty to some extent shadowed all our days on the island. It was to be months before we were to know. Meanwhile, we turned to our task of learning more of his people and their ways.

17. A South Sea Kulak

THERE WAS FLOUR in the village, the visiting Chinese from the *Ruahatu* having paid for copra in that commodity. With characteristic Tepuka procedure, thrifty in all things save preservation of food, a large community baking was immediately under way. Whether because wheat flour is a foreign luxury, or because of fear that, like most of their own produce, it will not keep, they must use it all at once. Probably it was for neither of these reasons, but proceeded rather from the established habit of the Tepukans, who each day catch enough fish for that day's food and do not try to keep it over for the next day. A striking instance of this disposition was furnished later by Temae, when Keneti, in return for the old man's services in guiding him to a temple ruin on the wind ward side of the island, gave him a bag of rice. Temae pressed into service all the pots, pans and oil cans he could find, and cooked all the rice at one time.

Earth ovens were prepared. Flour and water were mixed and wrapped in coconut leaves, making a small but solid loaf. Tepula knows not the uses of yeast, or has none to use. Stones were heated and rolled into the shallow excavations; upon these were laid fragrant leaves; the bread upon these, more leaves above, and the whole covered with earth and a top layer of palm branches.

About two hours sufficed to "cook" the bread. The villagers received their shares, apparently determined on the same basis as the papaya distribution, the loaves being taken out of the ovens and arranged in eight heaps.

The acting chief brought us our share of four loaves, which we regarded, privately, with dismay. I sliced off some of the heavy, soggy mixture, and tried to toast it, without success. We did eat some of it, but a large portion of our part of the baking found its way, after dark, to Kararo's pigs.

The next day a discussion arose over the division of food. It developed that the distribution on a basis of the number of persons, not including babies in arms, was no longer accurate. Some people had gone to Tepoto and their families were still receiving a share for them, which, it was pointed out, disequalized the distribution.

So there was great argument after which Teuri, as acting chief, began making a new list of all the inhabitants, to arrive at a reapportionment.

Matters of state are settled thus speedily in Tepuka. There is no congestion of the calendar, no delay. Disputes and questions of policy are thrashed out in public meeting; every body speaks his opinion, and a decision is reached by expres sion of community sentiment. The meeting is without benefit of

recognizable parliamentary practice; there is a tendency for many to speak at the same time; but after a while Temae and a few other cool-headed old people speak moderately and wisely; the debate subsides, and the meeting disbands without formal adjournment, as spontaneously as it assembled. No vote has been taken, no minutes have been kept, but the chief and the peace officer know, as a result of that meeting, the sentiment of the adult citizens, and they proceed to exe cute the community mandate.

The village baking, however, had a sequel which kept Keneti and me busy for several days thereafter, dosing the populace with castor oil and preaching to them the advisa bility of adhering to their own foods and their own customs, thus avoiding the ills that proceed from the ways of the white man.

There was further to-do a few days later. Kararo, the miser of the island, had laid claim to the village well, asserting that it was situated in land belonging to his family.

Just why Kararo had not pressed his claim earlier was not apparent. The matter came up, however, coincidentally with a project for rebuilding and improving the well. Perhaps this activity suggested the notion to Kararo, or perhaps this merely seemed to him a suitable time to advance his contention.

In our own country such a matter would have meant protracted litigation, appeals from court to court over a period of years, much trouble and expense, and more than likely Kararo would have been permitted to keep the well. In the Soviet Union, Kararo doubtless would have been, none too gently, expropriated and sent to hew wood in some inhospitable northern region.

We were again impressed with the simple good sense of Tepuka people. The men discussed the case, and decided against Kararo, on the ground that the well had been in community use from ancient times, as mentioned in the chants in praise of the land:

"I set my foot upon the stones of the well Tefano Maruia."

Kararo, it appeared, was a descendant of Maruia, but the well had been in use by the entire community so long that communal title to it was considered established.

Kararo accepted the decision, as is the custom, and we saw him, later, working, in apparent harmony with the others, at the well site. He, as one of the older men, was assigned to the group that procured and prepared food for the actual workmen. He was broiling fish on hot stones over a fire of coconut husks, across the street from the well, where the young men were digging up stones and redressing them or replacing them with new.

The methods of labor have changed little since the ancient times. A few steel tools are the only contribution made by the white man's civilization. New stones for the well were pried up with levers of wood and dragged to the scene, or more often carried, bound to a log which rested on the shoulders of men. There is no wheeled vehicle - not even a wheelbarrow - at Tepuka Maruia.

As the stones were brought they were dressed neatly with such axes as the

Tepukans have, and fitted in place, though without mortar, securely.

In such manner were the sacred places no doubt constructed centuries ago, the stones being carried by like laborious methods and trimmed by means even more arduous; the great stone slabs that stood upright at the head of the sacred platforms were borne thither likewise by hand.

The work on the well continued for a week or more, on a regular working schedule. So many men carried, dressed and placed the stones; so many fished, harvested papayas, and cooked the food for the workers. The job proceeded in Poly nesian fashion, with voluntary organization and apparently quite without a "boss" or definite instructions. Tehau chose the workers for the major divisions, but in the labor itself everybody seemed to know spontaneously what to do. It was an eloquent example of primitive communal organization: "From each according to his ability; to each according to his need."

When finished, the well was indeed a workmanlike job. About four feet square, the stone curbing rose from the bottom of an excavation perhaps six feet deep, and to a height of a yard or so above the surface of the ground, a rectangle of smooth coral blocks on which the arms of the women might rest as they dipped from the few inches of water that stood at the sandy bottom, and poured it into the larger containers. The wall also protected the well from contamination by surface trash, and prevented anybody from falling into it - though as everybody knew where it was, even in the dark, that was an unlikely occurrence.

Teuri, the acting chief, meanwhile was very busy with one of our typewriters, laboriously pounding out a long document in Tahitian. About noon of the third day he carried it in triumph to the well and tacked it up on a coconut tree. It was a list of prohibitions and rules for the use of the well.

"It is utterly forbidden ..." began nearly every article in this remarkable decree, and these prohibitions were fortified with a fine of twenty-five francs for each infringement, though it is doubtful whether anybody on the island had that much money.

The rules themselves were mainly reasonable enough, largely concerned with elementary sanitary precautions:

Pigs were not to be allowed within thirty yards of the well; children under seven years of age were not to draw water from it, or approach it unless accompanied by an adult; and among other things, no one was to draw water between the hours of six P.M. and six A.M. This latter provision would, we foresaw, be somewhat difficult to enforce, inasmuch as neither Teuri nor any other of the citizens had any means of telling the time.

Conservative opinion in the village regarded Teuri's water works code with mild amusement, not without an undertone of derision, although the rules were observed strictly enough. Twenty-five francs is a large sum in Tepuka - even in an IOU.

The popular criticism was that these laws were unnecessary. The well had

been in use for a long time, and the villagers knew very well how to use it; they had been keeping, as a matter of custom, most of the regulations, and as for the new one restricting the hours of use of the well, few people would draw water at night anyhow; it was too much trouble.

We were inclined to agree with them that Teuri's legalistic activities were superfluous. The island life had been regulated very well by unwritten common law, and we felt that the introduction of written statutes tended to upset the smooth working of the old system.

Teuri is an able man, but infected, through earlier residence in the Society Islands, with foreign notions. He would be founding a Rotary Club in Tepuka if he had ever heard of such a thing.

A few nights after the posting of the water laws, Teuri, returning late from fishing, stopped at our house and inquired, rather sheepishly, the time. With bucket in hand, he was on his way to the well and was, it appeared, on the verge of being the first to violate his own law.

Stifling a temptation to tell him it was half past six, we reflected that, salutary as the lesson might be, he needed water; so we told him that if he hurried he could just get his supply within the legal time. Teuri, much relieved, hastened to the well. After all, it wasn't six o'clock yet everywhere in the world.

From that day on, Teuri was noticeably careful to draw water early.

18. "The Ancestors Know"

THE OLD FOLK, despite Chief Maono's parting instructions, were reluctant at first to give up their chanted lore. These are sacred things, intimately connected with the spirit-world where the ancestors dwell; moreover, family proprietorship caused them to be guarded jealously, as are the genealogies with which some of them are related.

No such prohibition, however, applied to the art expression of the young people. They consented readily to chant for recording the song of the frigate-bird which accompanies one of their most vigorous dances. On an evening soon after the chief's departure, a male chorus gathered in our house and, with strong expression and amazing tempo, chanted the rude but beautiful lines of that spirited composition, which, splendid example of native poetry as it is, would scarcely bear translation.

Kararo, curious if scornful, came out of his nearby door way to listen.

"Nnnnnnnnh!" he observed. "The white men are taking up their time with the worthless modern rubbish of the young people. Why don't they learn the old things that are good and genuine?'

This was just what we wanted, as Keneti had been trying for some time to induce the elders to intone for him their ancestral chants. But when he asked Kararo to produce examples, that self-appointed censor protested, mendaciously, that he didn't know any.

Persevering we continued to record the literature of the younger set. Their meetings for that purpose presented an even more savage scene than those of the old people which we later experienced. In the dim light, Roki's crest of reddish hair plumed roofward as she blew into the harmonica the three clanging chords of the "tune." Tupu, a wild enough figure at any time, with his low brow and flaring nostrils that hinted of some obscure Melanesian ancestry, blew hollowly on a bottle to mark the time, and the voices of the singers rose and fell in the furious tempo of the love-chant. Tukua girded a scarlet waistcloth about her as a sash and stamped into a violent dance; others joined, till the place seemed to rock with the spirited, erotic movement. As they rested from that violent exercise, they sang more tender love songs, in which their voices are now preserved among the collections of a great institution of research.

They stayed late. Little Riua crept in and snuggled against my knee, pressing my hand with sisterly affection. Tohu and other boys lay under the table, whence, as the hour advanced, snores began to sound. A mischievous throng of children milled outside.

Tauria and Tupu remained after the crowd had left, to write for me the words of half a dozen chants - most of them quite unprintable in translation, but seeming natural enough in their simple, honest originals. Riua lingered after nearly all had gone, and left reluctantly at our bidding. I fell asleep while Tauria and Tupu laboriously spelled out the words of more chants, which I have before me, in their cramped penciling, as I write.

We learned, that night, that not all is peaceful in the Isle of Peace. Tepongi, who had become angry and gone else where to sleep, returned with charges that in her absence her husband Rangina had been over-friendly with Tauhoa. This accusation caused mutual recriminations, in the course of which stones were thrown, blows struck and Tepongi tried to tear off Tauhoa's clothes - an assault which shocked and bewildered that usually placid young woman to tears. Ariki got up from his mat and separated the combatants, beseeching them to be quiet and let him and Tukua sleep. Keneti, arising also in his wrath, announced that if they did it again he would beat on a tin can all night.

But our attention to the young people's literature had its effect in wearing down the opposition of the conservative elders. Kararo stopped at our door next day.

"Come to my house at midnight," he said. "We are going to chant."

So after midnight we lay on the mats in the house of Kararo - a large house, raised high on a platform of stones. A smoky lantern cast a small circle of light in the center, leaving the corners in shadow.

Tangia raised her weatherbeaten face and began, in a low, muffled tone, slowly, syllable by syllable, each sound carrying equal weight:

"The ringoringo comes on the southern wind .... "

With equal deliberation and solemn intensity, the others joined in:

"O bird of death, 0 bird of life,
Give courage in this hour of wondering!"

It was a lament, Kararo said, "the mourning of parents for an absent child." The child, as Kararo's daughter who had gone to Fakahina, is absent; the parent, in these islands where communication is so infrequent, has had no news of his dear one. The parent chants, both to soothe his own troubled spirit and to reach, in some telepathic way, the spirit of his loved one in the far land.

"The ringoringo," Kararo explained, "is a spirit, a spirit bird out of the Great Darkness, where the ancestors dwell. We do not know what it looks like. No one has ever seen the ghost-bird, but we hear its voice at night. It is a gentle voice; one can hardly hear it above the surf and the rustling of the leaves. When we hear it, we know there is going co be some change in our lives. If it comes from the south, the meaning may be either good or bad; if it comes from the north, it is a messenger of death."

Is the child well or ill in that far land?

"Is it the bird of death
or the bird of life that comes?...
The remote islands are hidden in cloud
in the search for my child.
0 ghost-bird, essence of the god,
come from the south!
Give courage in this hour of wondering!"

For the first time I felt drawn to the avaricious old Kararo, as his face softened and lit up with the chanting. Kararo never seemed quite the same after that; we had had a glimpse into his deeper heart. When I think of him now, I see that dim room of leaves, the mats over the white pebbles, the earnest singers around the lantern, and Kararo's face lifted in the chant: no longer the crafty, scheming face of a banker, but that of a simple, kindly old man, grieving for his child.

Hour after hour it went on, in quavering monotone, broken by fractional intervals. Older than memory, that chant, and we were the first white men to hear it.

"It is East Indian," said the pianist Ignaz Friedman, when I reproduced for him, in a San Francisco café, a fragment of it. And no doubt in form and melodic construction it does go back to the mainland of Asia, to that mysterious Havaiki whence the Polynesians came.

One could fancy that ancestral spirits hovered around us and that the voice of the ghost-bird sounded, low and ominous, in the night. Rain pattered on Kararo's roof; and the children stirred on their mats, as they slept, in the shadows.

"There is a murmuring within,"
the old people chanted:
"the murmur, the whisper, stir toward the sea,
searching for my lost canoe,
love murmurs gently .... "

Sleep pressed down upon me. I was climbing a flight of stairs, hand in hand with my little son - my own "lost canoe," dead these eight years - and at its top stood my father, gone too, a year and more. I heard their voices speaking in the Tuamotuan tongue. Out of the blur I heard someone saying aloud: "He does not understand." I awoke to hear the slow, somber chant still sounding through the night.

I would not willingly have missed this survival of prediscovery culture, which has remained alive because it has still an active function. Not only do the chants comfort the spirits of the living, but, even more important, they please the spirits of the ancestral dead.

"An ancestor," said Kararo, "comes in a dream and tells us where a turtle

will be caught. We go there and catch the turtle. Then, after we have brought it ashore, we must watch all night, still chanting, or the ancestor may become offended and take the turtle away."

It is clear that these solemn invocations are very old.

"They were composed," Tehau told me, when he told the story of my adopted ancestor Mokio-ariki, "by no living being, but by spirits in the Great Darkness. For that reason they are sacred and are never changed."

Some of the words have become obsolete, and the precise meaning is not always clear to the chanters themselves.

Temae, who was most likely to know, said, when pressed, that it didn't matter.

"The chants are not for us," he explained. "They are for the ancestors. What if we don't know what they mean? The ancestors know."

19. Old Men of Tepuka

SURF ROLLED HIGH on the coral ledges, and the channel was hilled with waves. Men were fishing from their frail canoes, despite rough weather. Theirs is no soft land: hunger does not wait for calm at sea. I saw that ragged line of battered dugouts, and the yellow pandanus hats above, as I strolled in a bright morning around the edge of the islet.

"We're going today," Keneti announced, "to call on Mokio."

The house of Mokio the Elder stood apart from the main group, looking out through fresh young palms to the lagoon. It was small but cozy, its furnishings few and practical, even more bare in their simplicity than those of other houses we had seen.

Mokio, a handsome man of perhaps sixty-five years, in a scanty loincloth, was making cordage. He had beaten the green husks of coconuts and drawn out the fibers, laying them in neat bundles. Selecting half a dozen of the longer ones, he was rolling them on his thigh, with his right hand, into a tight cord - a practice more difficult than it sounds or looks. At his side lay larger cords made by braiding the smaller ones together.

Squatting in his doorway, Mokio held out his hand as we approached, his beardless, finely furrowed face crinkling in a friendly smile. Looking straight at us out of intelligent, kindly eyes, he greeted Keneti, then turned to me, saying, "A good man."

"Your name had come to me," he continued, "but not your face. I am glad you are here."

As we sat on his mats, talk turned to the old times.

"I was a young man," he said, "when the first missionaries came. I ate of the turtle, on the sacred place.

The marae was thus .... "

He drew a diagram in the fine sand before his door.

"The god-houses were here, and here a small altar, and here the standing stones.

"This part was for the men. Here stood the priest, and he chanted thus. . . .

"Here stood the chief, and he responded ....

"The priest laid a bunch of puka leaves, twisted so" - he illustrated with a bit of coconut leaf - "on the altar, and prayed. Then he laid the leaves under the neck of the turtle to catch the blood as its throat was cut.

"The men ate what they could of the turtle, and came back the next day and the next, until it was gone. If a second turtle was caught, it was given to the boys. The turtle was kept alive on the marae all night, and the men

chanted over it until dawn."

"What were the god-houses of which you speak?"

"They were like small boxes. When a relative died, a hair of his head was threaded through a pierced stick, and the stick was laid in the god-house. Offerings of food were placed be fore it regularly for a year. Then the relative became a god and was able to guide turtles to us for food. And when we caught the turtle, we called up the spirits of our ancestors; they came to the feast and leaned their backs against the standing stones. . . . And the spears of the chiefs quivered in the wind from the Great Darkness. . . ."

He told us how the roll of spirits was called, beginning with the primal gods, as this company of the dead was bidden to the feast of the living. There could be no doubt of the genuineness of his account, for it was clear that he was telling of things that he had experienced; and indeed, as later developed, it checked in every essential with those given by other old men of the island. It was an amazing experience to sit in the presence of these men whose lives reached back into a vanished world. The marae is down now; its very stones have disappeared. The people meet in the chapel that stands near that sacred site, and pray to the god of the black-robed priests. But Mokio, and Teufi, and Temae, and Teuru te Po remember.

Our host accepted an American cigarette of a brand which is said to "satisfy," but disapproved of it. It was, he said, "just wind." He preferred the one I rolled for him of Dutch shag which was, he said, "good, and mild." Leaving him a tin of sardines, which vie with corned beef as a delicacy to the native palate, we walked out in the bright windy day to the house of Teufi. His is a larger house, with more possessions scattered about it: a wash tub, a coconut grater, and the only grindstone on the island. Constructed of palm midribs, and roofed with pandanus, it is airy and strong; it had stood, he said, eight years.

Teufi was a traveled man.

"I went to sea in my youth and visited many countries. On one voyage, I was in a boat that was being towed between two islands, when the boat turned over. My chest went to the bottom, and with it the copy of my genealogy."

This was a severe loss, since it is through genealogies that land rights are determined, but I fancy that Teufi, like most men of his generation, had his lineage fixed firmly in memory.

He had lost land, however, in the hurricane of 1906.

"When the storm had passed, the boundaries were gone; the face of the land had changed. Since boundaries could not be determined, and claims of different families clashed, the land was made public property."

Teufi led us on a walk around the end of the islet, pointing out, as we went, the exact site of the great marae Rangihoa, no stone of which remains, unless some of them repose in the foundations of the Sacred Heart, but still marked by a grove of sacred trees. This, he said, had been the principal temple, and the only one which really counted. The others had been temporary

affairs.

The walk took us through a more densely forested part of the island, Teufi revealing knowledge at every step. Of this plant, he had heard that the roots were eaten, though he never had tried it himself. The root of this fern, when dried, was fragrant, and in olden times was hung in the ears of women. This plant was the "prickly leaf" mentioned in the chants, and this one was used as a laxative. He recited the names of the "lands" through which we passed, and described the sacred place of each. We came upon one of them, of which some stones still stood - a lonely monument overgrown with shrubs. It had not been used in his time, he said.

"It was customary," he explained, "to use only one marae in a district. But disputes arose; a chief, considering himself slighted in some way, would withdraw and build his own temple; later the quarrel would be composed, and he would abandon the new marae and go back to the old one."

This, he said, accounted for the large number of these ruins on small islands.

As we came out on the lagoon shore, boys were in the shallows, sailing ingeniously contrived toy yachts fitted with sails made of strips of red cloth. The tiny craft skimmed swiftly over sand and sea before the wind.

Karere, handsome daughter of Varoa, bare from about the region of the navel, was tossing a ball made of woven leaves to other young women. As we passed, she stood up and danced eloquently, shouting to us as she twirled her magnificent torso - a savage, beautiful sight in the vivid sunlit land scape of sand and forest and lagoon.

Temae, the oldest man on the island, was slower to give up his wisdom, but his mood seemed to soften after the birth of his grandchild Teahio-ariki, who was more familiarly called, in my companion's honor, Keneti. Temae and his daughters fancied that the ethnologist resembled Temae's son who had died a few years before of injuries received in a fall from a tree while hunting birds.

Temae was a sturdy, grizzled man, of medium height but broad shouldered and muscular. Like others of his generation, he disdained the dungarees and shorts of the younger men, wearing only the loincloth. He was more hairy than most of the islanders; his cheeks were rough with short gray beard, which grew out over his mouth in broad drooping mustaches; on his legs and thighs small dark curls gave the effect of circular tattooing.

He undoubtedly knew more about the ancient life than any of his contemporaries, but gave it out only a little at a time, often holding back vital particulars. Sometimes his mood would change abruptly, and he would wave aside all questions and talk no more. When he did talk, it was rapidly and indistinctly, and with no patience to repeat that we might understand.

Yet as we talked with Temae, we realized how rich and full was his life, with his vast knowledge of the land and its lore, and in comparison how empty the life of the young people who have abandoned these things and try

to imitate Tahiti. Every little section of land lived, to him; he knew its name, the meaning of it, its history. He had passed through the epidemic of dysentery that had slain nearly all his generation; he had been ill himself, but had recovered. He remembered clearly the arrival of the first missionary. Doubtless he was one of those of whom Montiton relates, who hid their women and children in the bush when the ship arrived.

Temae made for us old-fashioned knives of eels' teeth, and his wife Ngohe wove the ancient garment of pandanus matting, a stiff and awkward garb, abandonment of which for the softer and more convenient imported cotton is easy to understand.

"There is nothing that was made in the old time," he boasted, in one of his more garrulous moments, "that I can not make. There is nothing that was done that I cannot do."

We marveled at Temae's appetite. When he went with Keneti to visit a marae that was better preserved than any at our end of the island, the supplies that had been intended to last three days were consumed in one morning, before the party had reached its destination. People at the windward side, however, had food. Temae took a huge fish, slit it lengthwise with his thumb, and devoured it entire, raw, covering himself with blood and scales, while swarms of flies settled on him from head to foot. Then he finished off with such shark, octopus, and coconut as he could lay hands on, and was hungry again whenever food became available.

That trip furnished an illustration of Temae's uneven temperament. On the way, they came across a man making a canoe on land in which Temae had family rights. This so annoyed Temae that he would say no word about the marae, but kept muttering about the trespass. Only food could stir him to any other interest.

When I was visiting him one evening, he was cutting up a tuna which he had just caught. Ripping out a huge internal organ - a liver, perhaps - he swallowed it, raw as it was, with evident enjoyment. No doubt this instinct for raw food is one thing that has kept the people of the island healthy in an environment that offers little variety in diet.

Temae, however, confirmed, bit by bit, what other old men had told us, and added details.

Teufi and Teuru te Po were boys who ate the leavings of the turtle. I myself was taught, in youth, the ceremonies and the prayers."

All this was long ago, he said, and these were "things of Satan." Of what use were they now?

Weeks afterward, Keneti and Temae went again to the windward shore. Younger men crowded about, and Temae would not talk. Keneti, frantic with apprehension, had about given up hope when at last he lured the old man forth upon Temae's own ancestral marae. Alas! Temae wasn't in the mood. All he would talk about was food. But Teufi appeared, and then Teuru te Po, and before long they were vying with one another to display knowledge.

"It was thus," said Teufi, tying a bunch of puka leaves to Keneti's wrist.

"And thus," rejoined Teuru te Po, sprinkling an imaginary congregation with holy sea water.

Temae was not to be outdone on his own marae. Before he could check himself, he launched into a heathen prayer, and between them, on those tumbled ancient stones, the whole ceremony was unfolded, as it had been performed for generations past - as, we suspect, parts of it still are performed, secretly, when a turtle is caught, for the old men know these invocations too glibly to have remembered them from a childhood sixty-odd years ago without frequent repetition since that time.

These may be "things of Satan," as they say, but I am sure turtles are staked out on Maono's land near the old sacred enclosure, and that Temae and the others meet there and chant at least portions of the old ceremonies, and invite the ancestors to the feast.

I am sorry that no turtle was caught while Keneti and I were there. We would have sat with our friends on the improvised marae in Maono's land, and eaten of the turtle, and invited our adopted ancestors. I would have invited Mokio ariki. Perhaps he would have come.

20. Singing in the Street

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, as our stay lengthened, the villagers gathered on the low wall and in the sand of the street to practice the singing for Chief Maono's return.

The full moon slanted mellow light against the palms as Tupu and I went out to join them. I sat on a rock, with Ma ono's little daughter Tiare leaning against my shoulder, and listened. The singers sat in shadow, but I could recognize the cracked voice of Teroro-tu, leading in solo:

"0 Maono our chief ... "

whereupon the rest joined in, singing three parts in the nasal but not unpleasant Tuamotuan style:

Alas that you have left us!"

the women and some of the men carrying the air, other men beating a counter-rhythm, with repetitions, but always com ing out even. A few, leaning forward, elbows on knees, and cupping their hands, played a weird bass upon their hollowed fingers. Above the others, the voice of Tuata sounded reedily, like an organ, through the night.

The effect, especially at a little distance which heightened the blending, was rich and moving. I never heard it without being stirred.

Tukua, who, as the chief's daughter, apparently could not participate officially in her father's public welcome, sat beside me, joining with me softly in the singing when I could remember the words. Tauhoa walked to and fro, cradling in her arms Brains of Heaven, her daughter by Maono's son Pini; and eventually sat down opposite me, soothing the child, who cried softly.

The chanting ceased. Old Temae, seated on the curb opposite, began to speak, slowly and in a low voice, as if praying. The children squatted about him. The young people, at first attentive, apparently lost interest as he continued. Showing the corruption of foreign contacts, they began to laugh and talk among themselves. They were modern, Tahitianized what had this old-fashioned man to do with them? An obscure resentment stirred within me at their lack of respect for that authentic representative of a more genuine life than anything they could know. To me, the old savage was intensely impressive.

As he ceased, an old woman farther down the street took up the strain, in a voice that sounded as if she were scolding. I asked Tauria what the row was

about.

"There is no row," he replied; "these are patriotic chants."

I had been listening to Tuamotuan eulogies. Temae, whose language, like that of many of the old people, was more difficult to understand than that of the young, had been reciting the glories of his country and applying them to the accomplishments of Maono's administration.

Later I was to learn some of these patriotic poems. These people have loved their country, hard and meagerly productive as it is, and have made songs in praise of it.

One of them became especially dear to us for its delightful description of the children playing in the lagoon, where they joined us day after day, shading their eyes, as they ran, against the dazzling sunlight that flooded the island wherever there was a break in the dense roof of palms. The unknown composer had improved upon the standard pattern which merely lists the name of the land, the sacred place, the assembly ground, the well, and the ancestor, by introducing concrete images which, I submit, are beautiful with the bare sunlit beauty of his island:

"Tepuka Maruia is the land
where noble warriors sit at the sacred place Rangihoa.
I set my foot upon the stones of the well Tefano Marnia;
Tepuka Maruia is my country.
Kikiviri is the place of the children:
splashing and playing in the glittering shallows,
bending their necks in the glare of the noonday sun.
The assembly ground Hirioro is a shaded place.
Let the shade fall on my own land Titoro-mata-uiui;
come there gently to me, beloved woman,
flower of my country, Tepuka Maruia!"

While the chanting was going on, little Maruia ran into the glow of a dying fire, seized a coconut-husk ember, and danced, whirling it above her head till it streamed a spiral of orange-colored flame around her tiny body and flimsy garment. Had this occurred, I reflected, in a civilized community, the elders, in alarm, would have rushed, with severe admonitions, to rescue the child; but here, nobody appeared to notice. The children of Tepuka know how to take care of themselves. Running back, she gave the burning brand to Tauria, who lit a cigarette and passed the light on.

As I was adjusting my mat for the night, after the singers had dispersed, the sound of a harmonica drifted in and a voice called me to a dancing party of the young people, where a childish jest caused much merriment. Temata, removing her pareu, slipped up behind and bound Roki and me together as we danced opposite each other - whereupon all present laughed themselves out of breath.

The violent exercise of the frigate-bird dance which followed was fun, in the cool evening. After the dance, we trooped back to the house. On the way, I

must confess, Tauria and Tupu, bending over, made themselves into a "horse," and Tohu and I, leaping upon their backs, "rode," to the huge delight of the onlookers, down the main street. Thus does one renew one's childhood, among the children of the sun!

21. A Tuamotuan Epic

MOEAVA WAS ONE of the great ancestors," said Hiti.

It was after midnight, when the children were asleep and the young people absorbed in lovemaking under the palms. We lay in a row around the dim light in Maké's house.

In a low, somber voice, scarcely audible outside, Hiti chanted of the Great Foundation and the Lesser, and the Thresholds of Night and Day. His tale of Moeava was long and repetitious, but stripped of native verbosity, it still contains the elements of an epic - a savage tale, full of slaughter and vengeance, a glimpse of the Tuamotu in their wildest years.

Moeava, then, was a chief of the far-away isles of Takaroa and Hao, some five hundred years ago. In a great double canoe, with twin sewn hulls, a thatched cabin, a mast and a mat sail, he visited all of the islands and conquered most of them. Somewhere in his voyaging he heard of the beauty of Huarei, offspring of Maruia and the gods of the Darkness, and chiefess of Tepuka, and he sailed to seek her for his bride.

His ship arrived off that island in the dawn; Huarei was sitting at the most sacred place of the temple, where she alone of all women had the right, and from afar Moeava beheld her beauty as he approached the ruddy fringe of the island. Tradition has preserved the very words of this wanderer of the sea.

"You are a rare wreath of flowers," he sang, "for Moeava, in the land of the puka trees."

Their child was Kehauri, who became a mighty chief from whom some of our friends at Tepuka claim descent.

After some years, the old restlessness stirred in Moeava's heart, and with his new family he sailed for Takaroa. There, however, a dispute arose between the Tepuka-born son and his half-brothers of Takaroa over the division of the turtle, and to appease the boy, Moeava returned with him and the mother to Tepuka.

In his absence, the eighteen tribes whom he had subjected leagued to attack Takaroa, and killed and ate three of Moeava's sons. The remaining son and his sister hid in a tree, called ever afterward "The Leaves of Sorrow," and sent a pair of white terns to carry the sad news to Moeava.

"White terns, fly to Huarei, woman of great excellence and beauty; fly to Moeava, that mighty warrior. Tell them the white terns of Takaroa have fallen!"

The terns carried the message, and Moeava set out on a war of vengeance that lasted many years. Stopping at the isle of Makemo to replenish

provisions, he fell in with the men of one of the hostile tribes, and heard their boasts. The tale relates that he strung them, like fish, upon a cord attached to a sharpened bit of wood, and dragged them behind his canoe till he came to Takaroa, where he cast his captives upon the still smoking ovens that had cooked his slain sons for the feast.

Then, pursuing his remaining enemies from island to island, he killed them wherever found, and brought all their islands under his rule. The rest of his life, the story naively relates, "he lived quietly at Takaroa."

That was the only warlike story I heard at Tepuka. Relatively remote and out of the track of voyagers among the better-known islands, it seems to have escaped the fighting and cannibalism that ravaged the central and western Tuamotu.

Drowsiness swam over me as we sat silently, hour after hour, while Hiti chanted of more ancient and sacred things. The lamp burned low. The spirits clustered more thickly ....

Before my sleep-bemused eyes, Moeava himself seemed to stand in the doorway: tall and broad-shouldered, nude save for a mat of pandanus wrapped about his loins. A band of pandanus leaf supported tall plumes in his reddish-brown hair, and feathers of the frigate-bird were threaded through openings in his ear-lobes. In his right hand he carried a spear pointed with a porpoise-jaw; thrust into his girdle was a short knife set with the teeth of eels.

In the shadow behind Rici stood Mokio-ariki, fierce and powerful as he. His left hand rested on the shoulder of his wife, Fangu, for whose sake, a Polynesian Orpheus, he had descended into the Great Darkness. In face and form she resembled Tukua, daughter of the present chief. She, too, wore a pandanus mat; about her ankles, twists of green leaves; fragrant fern-roots twined from her ears, and on her head a band ornamented with shells and crowned with feathers.

Shadowy and vague, they clustered around: Hiro from far Tahiti, wearing the crimson loincloth; Maruia, her red-gold hair streaming over pale brown queenly shoulders, catching ruddy gleams from the dying lamp. . . .

I awoke as the roar of surf deepened on the outer reef. Al] was still in the house, save for the deep snoring of Hiti. My neck was cramped from the wooden pillow. Someone had thrown a mat over me to keep out the early morning chill. Through the doorway the sky showed faintly light. Keneti had completed his recording of Hiti's chant and gone. Leaving a twist of tobacco where Hiti would find it when he awoke, I rose and went through the lightening street, pondering the mysteries of that country where they say the gods still walk with those who chant their names.

22. Shipwrecked

"A SHIP! A SHIP!"

Ship day in the Tuamotu has somethina of the atmosphere of Sunday: work is abandoned, except for loading copra, and people sit about, idle and curious, stirred by the unwonted contact with the outer world.

Children ran past the house toward the beach, that June day, shouting. Looking out toward the landing, we recognized the *Vaite*, from Papeete, calling for copra - a chance to mail letters and replenish supplies.

Keneti boarded the ship first, with Teuri. The canoe came back for me, its occupant becoming overbalanced as he neared the "harbor" and tipping unceremoniously out of it.

"Let's go," invited Tupu, as the boat was drawn up on the reef.

It was one of those tiny dugout canoes with a light out rigger, attached in the old fashion of the island which, as far as I know, is the only style of canoe in those seas that resembles in that respect the canoes of Hawaii. Tupu held forth two chickens:

"Hold them!" he requested.

One of Chief Maono's sons ran up with a letter addressed to his father in Tahiti.

"Don't get it wet," he admonished.

There was rougher sea than I should have cared to traverse alone, but Tupu, of a race accustomed to go to sea in canoes in all but the most severe weather, seemed unperturbed. I scarcely expected to reach the ship, as wave after wave tilted our precarious shell of paper-thin wood and spilled over the low side.

Tupu bent to the one paddle, now and then turning the boat sharply to av01d an unusually menacing wave. Ar last we were nearly alongside the *Vaite*, and I drew a long breath, thinking, "Well, he made it!"

Just at that moment, Tupu miscalculated. The canoe rose on a wave, plunged head on into the ship's boat, which was moored alongside, and overturned. I dived, shoulders first, into the sea, and came up, still holding the chickens and Maono's letter, just in time to receive the overturning outrigger float full on my nose and upper jaw.

"Never mind about the canoe," called Tupu, as he struggled to right it. "Just climb aboard with those chickens."

The deck was crowded with natives, mostly men, who had come aboard to sell fish, or just to gaze. Ah Siun and Ah Kui, merchants and copra brokers, were there to renew their scanty stock in trade.

The infrequent calls of these schooners and the government ship about once a year are normally the sole contact of these outlying islands with other places. The *Vaite*, to Te puka, represents the great world - all the islands of the Tuamotu, and Tahiti, center of life and civilization. It brings mail and foreign tools, clothing and foreign foods, and the rare messages from the government.

Returning with Keneti in the ship's boat, in imminent peril of its turning over on the reef and crushing us beneath its weight, we landed safely, though not without another wet ting as we plunged into waist-deep water while the Tahitian sailors dragged the boat up on the dripping slope of rock.

Toward evening the *Vaite* sailed away, the last ship, save our own belated little cutter, to call there during the remainder of our stay. From then on, we were utterly cut off from the world.

Thinking nothing of these things, however, any more than of the sharks that inhabited both the inner and outer waters and whose flesh we ate occasionally with our native friends, we swam in the lagoon, under a cold wind, and in the ev ning joined the singers and dancers in Teuri's dooryard.

Keneti caused astonishment and provoked applause, in an intermission of the music, by walking on his hands across the sanded enclosure. Tauria tried to imitate him, but could not keep his balance. We played leapfrog with Tauria and Tupu; I dived over Keneti and created further astonishment by high-jumping over a stick held aloft by two of our friends. The native method apparently is to run at the stick, as if to jump over it, and then suddenly duck under it. Pressed for more feats of agility, Keneti and I carried each other standing on each other's shoulders. Then we must practice the frigate bird dance, which we liked better.

All in all, it was a fairly strenuous evening, and the mats felt good, on the stone floor, after the unaccustomed exercise. My mishap "off port" produced no ill effects beyond a slight soreness which I forgot in the excitement of the entertainment. The air filtered coolly through the interstices of our woven walls; the palm fronds clashed softly overhead in darkness peopled by friendly spirits. Not all of those spirits were to be so friendly, but this we could not know.

23. A Home is Built

TOWARD THE END of our second month on the island, work began on construction of a house for the absent priest. Women plaited coconut leaves for the walls. Men brought timbers for the frame.

Each man laid down a stone. Tehau divided the stones into two heaps, and divided one of these again. There were forty in all. Half the men were told off to procure and prepare food, and half to work on the house.

The twenty workmen cleared a place near the new church, laid out the timbers, matching the ends to fit together, and digging holes for the posts. I saw Takina raising a big stone and hurling it repeatedly into a hole to break up the rock beneath so he could dig.

By evening they had the frame up. The fishermen came back with food. It was Monday, and there had been none in the village. The men had worked all day with nothing to eat but bits of copra which they nibbled as they dug and chopped.

The second day they cut and fitted the rafter poles and the third day covered the sides with panels of coconut leaf. Women wove the panels, and men fastened them in place, green and fresh-looking while new. The panels ran straight across; the doors and windows - for this house, unlike others, was to have the latter-were to be cut through later.

The house made a fairly neat appearance, but it was apparent that the use of foreign tools was vitiating the old skills.

"They're not doing a really good job," commented Keneti. "The panels would look much better with the old-time lashings of cord. The whole thing has an air of haste - not the careful, loving pride of a builder."

Was it possible that the spirit of hurry had begun to infect our simple islanders?

The house was finished, closed, and stood empty for the remainder of our stay on the island. The priest would come, some time, and when he came, he would have a suitable house.

The old houses of the priest stood at the other side of the main street: two small shacks of the intermediate style of construction, now falling to pieces. A rude bedstead stood in one: a frame of poles, across which were tied cords to uphold the bedding. A mat would have been more comfortable. In the other house stood an equally rude table and bench. The priests of the Tuamotu have no easy life.

The eastern Tuamotu were reached by missionaries rather late - about 1870 - but at a time when they were still relatively savage and even more

difficult of access than today. An early missionary at Tepuka, who later volunteered for service at Molokai and ended his days there, is said to have suffered in his later years from the hardships of his life in the low islands - sleeping on mats and subsisting on coconuts and fish.

Their labors seem to have been successful, as in most Polynesian lands. The people of Tepuka and Tepoto are at least nominally Catholic, and the change seems to have been accomplished in a single generation. It had been predicted, according to legend, by a priest of the pagan faith, as it had in Tahiti and Hawaii:

"Strangers will come, bringing the teaching of another god, and the old gods will pass away, and with them the ancient customs."

The old men told us, however, of a curious relapse. Temae, who, being the oldest, had the most vivid memory of those times, recalled the native convert Teuru-rehu, who became Father Montiton's assistant, and who accompanied the missionary through various islands. Teuru-rehu, said Temae, later reverted to the faith of his ancestors and reconverted many of his countrymen, causing the nearest approach to civil war in the island's history.

"A quarrel arose, in the windward islets, ever this matter. Teuru's father raised an ax to strike my father, but my father caught the upraised arm and saved himself, and the quarrel ended."

As often happens, the first generation of converts were the most devout and zealous in casting away the old customs.

The middle-aged people today," said Roki, "know more about the ancient times than the old people, far the old have forgotten; also, when the people who were mature at that time were busy going to church and learning the new things, their children were at home with the grandparents, learning the ancient wisdom. Maono knows more than any of them. He is a tahunga, and was taught by his grandfather. Paunu also 1s a tahunga, and when he comes from Tepoto he will teach you many things."

We were eager to meet Paunu, and the time came when we did. Meanwhile the old men continued, little by little, to reveal glimpses of surviving customs.

24. The Manhood Rite

"YES," confirmed Teufi, "the rite of *kiri* is still performed. Only lately several boys passed through it. When a boy is about twelve years old, he is ready."

Teufi was speaking of the manhood rite, common to the Polynesians, somewhat similar to the custom of circumcision which exists among various peoples of the Old World.

"The day before the ceremony, the father visits the tahunga and makes the preparations. The boy is not told about it until the morning of the day.

"Maono and his brother Tokoriu are the qualified tahunga for this ceremony. The tahunga has an assistant and a nurse, who attends to the bandaging and medication, and who purifies the boy by washing him in salt water. The cutting is done nowadays with a razor blade instead of the old-fashioned wooden knife, but the flat piece of bone on which to cut is still used.

"After the operation the boy sits on a stool-a place of honor - in the house and his male and female relatives console him by singing. There are special chants for this purpose.

"In the afternoon there is a feast. Only brothers who themselves have passed through the ceremony partake of this feast. The father and his brothers do not attend it. Usually a pig is killed. In the old days a bread was made from the scraped starch of the pandanus, but now we use flour from the Chinese store. The drink is coconut water. No other food may be eaten until all of this is used up. It takes about three days.

"When the food has been eaten and the wound of operation has healed, more food is prepared, and a general feast is given for all relatives and friends. This feast is called the lifting of the tabu."

"In my time," said the aged Ngohe, "such ceremonies were also held when a girl's ears were pierced.

"This was done when the girl had taken her first sweet heart. Her sweetheart pierced her ears and partook of the feast. There were ceremonies; the parents chanted in recognition of the passing of childhood and the coming of womanhood.

"Our ears were pierced with larger holes in those days," Ngohe continued, showing her own. "They were thrust through with a sharp piece of wood, and ornaments of fragrant fern were hung in the openings.

"Now the old customs have fallen away; the meaning of the ear-piercing has been lost. The young people do not know or care for the old traditions.

Why, the young women, at the time when they should be separated for the tabu days, no longer wear the skirt of green leaves and - worst of all - they even sleep in the house on the same mats with the men!"

Nowadays, Maukiri told us, the ears are pierced by a relative, usually rather early in life. The opening is made with a needle; a thread is worked in to enlarge it, and eventually a piece of the small purple spine of a sea-urchin is inserted to hold it open until earrings can be obtained. I saw many sea urchin ear-plugs, and few earrings. Earrings are costly. Tekava, wife of Ah Siun, wore them - great hoops of thinly gold-plated brass, like curtain rings - and Tinaku, who had been to Fakahina, had them nodding about her head.

"Yes," said Maukiri, "I know the ear-piercing chant."

Ngohe had refused to repeat it, saying it was sacred.

I sat in Maukiri's house, listening to the chant and admiring its beautiful erotic lines and its references to heroic legend "the red skin of Tahaki" and "the sacred crimson bird."

Fangu and Tauhoa brought me a pillow - one of the modern fashion favored by the young people, stuffed so tightly with raw tree-cotton that it was almost as hard as the wooden pillow of their elders - and I reclined in state while we discussed and compared modes of circumcision - Ah Kui joining in the conversation from the doorway and little Tiare listening. As the chant went on, the child, at risk of transferring certain fauna from her head to mine, gently combed my hair. And we all drowsed in the mellow late afternoon, as the droning chant went on.

25. Island Love-dance

WE LEARNED, too, more of another surviving ancient custom than Teuri had told us on the first night of our stay, when we had seen its preliminaries - a custom about which, I find, questioners who have not visited Polynesia are so curious that no account of a sojourn there would be complete without it. So, then ...

Evening nestles over the atoll, buttoned with stars. A wide moon climbs the worn stairway of night. Above the rough broken coral land, palm fronds clash softly in the sea wind. Unseen, vague terns fly over, their low cries descending eerily among the houses woven of leaves. Beyond the narrow sand, the restless Pacific claws at the red reef.

At the end of the road, beyond the last house of the village, the young people gather for the dance, their bare brown feet ruffling noiselessly the white ribbon of sand or rattling the dry dead branches of old coral, the broken flowers of the sea. A rapid chant, staccato, erotic, throbs down the whispering night.

In couples, not embracing as the foreigners do, but following two and two around a circle or turning face to face and posturing with eloquent bodies, the young folk of the coral island dance the ancient love-dance of their tribe. Hands and feet gesture ardently; hips shake and seem to revolve as on a pivot; knees oscillate beneath the crouching form and, stirring, kindling, provocative, the chant sounds on.

Hour after hour the bare feet shuffle and stamp the pebbled sand and the chant thuds like a drum-beat into the island night. The moon sinks lower over the sea. Shadows stretch and blend under the palms. Two by two the dancers drift away to the leaf-woven houses, or to mats laid in the clean swept dooryards, under the sky. Quiet surges over the village; the low murmur of voices, the hushed laughter, blend stealthily into the shuffle of wind in the trees and the trampling of surf against the reef.

Such may be the scene on almost any moonlight night at Tepuka Maruia. The dancers are the young unmarried people, whose trial matings are a recognized custom.

They range in age from about fourteen to eighteen or nineteen. By the time a Tuamotuan is twenty, he or she usually is ready to settle down and raise a family. But society in this still relatively primitive land concedes what among us is considered "advanced modernity" - the right of youth to its period of experimentation. It is not merely a matter of letting youth have its playtime. The people of Tepuka believe it is necessary for normal development. It is a

custom as old, probably, as the Polynesian people; as old, perhaps, as the lost Central Asian race from whom, in the dim beginnings of humanity, both they and we may have evolved.

These young people who, in America, would be high school students, constitute a definite class in the community, the name of which, if I interpret it aright, conveys the Polynesian idea of the business of youth - literally, "the age of pleasure."

Their youthful mating apparently is based on mutual attraction. It is casual, but tends to become more or less permanent. That is, the same girl and boy normally will remain sweethearts for sometime, perhaps a year or so, until they quarrel or one of them goes away to another island or be comes interested in another partner. Eventually, as the couples grow older, one or another of these attachments becomes established; the girl goes to live in the man's house or he in hers, and perhaps in the course of time and opportunity it may occur to them to have the relationship blessed by the church.

Affairs are likely to start at dancing parties. That is what the dances are for. The chants that accompany them are called "that which causes one to think about it"apparently a Tuamotuan way of defining erotic suggestion. Sometimes attachments are promoted by the elders. A matron may call a young man aside and say, "My younger sister, over there, would be a good sweetheart for you. Why don't you take her home with you tonight?" Or an elderly man may say to the son of a neighbor, or to a newly arrived bachelor, "You will be looking for a girl. Do not choose hastily. Look them all over carefully. And do not make your choice until you have considered my two granddaughters." But the selection is usually more spontaneous.

Advances may be made by either the young man or the girl. It is quite proper for a young woman to inquire of a newcomer to the village, "Do you want a girl?" It is equally proper for the man to make the proposal, either to the girl direct or through members of her family.

Young people rarely have houses of their own, as had Maono-iti and his sweetheart Teuringa-iti. They live usually with parents or relatives. The young man, however, is welcome in the home of the girl's family, or she in his. If the house is somewhat crowded, as often is the case, the climate favors a mat under a coconut tree, which offers greater privacy than the huddle of a Polynesian household. In that event, they will tell an elder where they are going, since it is a breach of etiquette to leave without announcement. The mother or grandmother will then respond: "Go, my children, and sleep under the coconut tree; and if it rains, come back into the house." It is customary, however, as a matter of courtesy, to spend at least the first few nights in the house with the family.

There is a certain delicacy in these relations, at their best. The association, when the customs are strictly observed, is at first, we were told, strictly what is sometimes called in other countries a "white marriage." Two or three nights, perhaps a week or more, go by, in which the young couple sleep side

by side, without further intimacy - a custom that seems to have survived, in the European branch of the race, in the form of our celebrated New England "bundling." After they have become, as they say, "accustomed" to each other, they become lovers, but ordinarily continue to reside separately with their respective households, meeting only at night.

Though frankness increases as one travels farther from the more "civilized" places, it is curious to note that there is some pretense even in so relatively primitive a community as Tepuka. There, the young man does not go to his sweetheart's house, or she to his, before dark, and lie or she always leaves before daylight. The origin of this custom would be difficult to trace. In a community of two hundred people, where everybody knows everything everybody else is doing, this stealing in and out by night obviously doesn't fool anybody. Nor, in a community which not only tolerates but encourages these unions, is there any practical reason for trying to keep them secret. I am inclined to think secrecy is not the purpose, but that the gesture of concealment proceeds from the instinct for privacy. There is little enough privacy, at best, in a Polynesian village.

When a relationship of this kind has become established, it is recognized by a mutual exchange of gifts. The girl weaves a hat for her sweetheart, and he gives her such presents as he can provide: scented soap and perfume are popular, when obtainable, or it may be a new pareu or a few yards of cheap cotton dressgoods from the Chinese store. As the association continues, perhaps he provides food for her from his fishing. She, in turn, washes, irons and mends his clothes.

Children, it seems, rarely result from these early companionate relationships. Tauhoa, with her two children by Pini, was rather the exception. Just why this is, is difficult for an outsider to determine. The people themselves say they understand limitation of offspring, but their explanations are rather vague. I am satisfied that infanticide, which early missionaries reported in Tahiti and Hawaii, is not now practiced, if it ever was, in the Tuamotu. If a girl does become a mother, as has Tauhoa, no disgrace is attached to the matter. In Tuamotuan society, an unmarried woman has an equal right to bear children, if she wants them. As children more often than not are taken care of, in any case, by their grandparents rather than by their parents, there is no social penalty upon either mother or child for what in our language is called illegitimacy.

The partners ordinarily remain faithful during the life of the association. A man has the right, according to custom, to beat his sweetheart if she strays, but only if he himself meanwhile has been faithful. If he, too, strays, he loses that right. Sometimes, as may happen in other lands as well, the customary order is reversed - our acquaintance Tepongi frequently beat her stalwart husband Rangina. In general, however, these couples seem to live in harmony.

Whether "love," in the sense in which novelists write of it, exists among them, is doubtful. There is no word in their language exactly equivalent to our

word "love." Three words are often so translated: one of them means pity, compassion, Christian charity; another means friendly affection; the third means desire. If this and other evidence be significant, the indication is that the primitive Polynesian has no notion of love in the romantic sense. Affection, often lasting affection, undoubtedly does exist and forms a basis for companionships that continue for many years. Temae and Ngohe, for example, more than rated a golden wedding anniversary.

These people have not been exposed to romantic literature, with its emphasis on the complex of correlations comprehended by our term "love." Apart from that, however, the pattern of marital history there and here, when stripped of conventional notions, is similar. Natural selection proceeds through mutual physical attraction; a more or less brief period of adjustment ensues, which we call courtship and engagement and they call "becoming accustomed"; then intimacy and a recognized relationship are established, which in both cases may be of short or long duration. If all goes well, it develops into a lasting association based upon mutual friendly affection. These Polynesian matings, like ours, are not indissoluble, but tend to become permanent.

Expression of affection, however, is not the same as among Americans or Europeans. There is little caressing, as we understand the term. It is perhaps significant that before arrival of foreigners the kiss was unknown in Polynesia, and that it is still rare in the more remote islands. The Polynesian embrace, often somewhat erroneously described as "rubbing noses," is mainly a formal expression between relatives. There is a whole set of varying degrees of this salutation, according to degree of relationship. The lower down it is performed, the closer the tie indicated. It consists in pressing the nose to the face, neck, chest, or the region of the diaphragm, and holding the pose for several seconds. It is not mutual. The person who is being greeted looks off solemnly into space, while the active greeter performs the ceremony.

Among Polynesians, as elsewhere, there are exceptions to nearly all rules. It is a mistake, at least in the Tuamotu, to assume, as is sometimes asserted, that the members of a group of primitive people are all alike, conforming rigidly to a prescribed pattern. They observe in general the conventions of the society in which they live, but they vary in character and disposition as much as we. Some are affectionate, faithful, passionate or what-not, in greater or less degree than others. There are young people, and a few older ones, such as was gossiped of Tekaviu, who prefer not to choose a single partner, but to vary their associations. There are girls who are shy and who do not, as the island idiom has it, "fall down in the street." Popular belief is that such girls will grow up without breasts. Indeed, Fangu the daughter of Maukiri frankly attributed her lack of mammary equipment to untimely continence in youth.

Occasionally, we were told, young men take such a situation in hand. They seize the shy maiden, carry her off to a secluded place, and initiate her forcibly. It was not clear just how frequent this practice is, and whether it is a

genuine old custom or a modern one that has grown up with the decay of the older culture and the consequent relaxation of native 143 restrictions. We gathered the impression that such an assault is not considered, as in the white man's country, a serious crime, though I am sure the more thoughtful members of the community hold it in poor taste. The girls, at least, often resent it, but there apparently is no such community indignation as is stirred by such an act in America. The procedure seems to be regarded rather as a rude sort of play among the young people.

Paunu, a Tuamotuan of the finest type, had been accustomed to guard his daughters, keeping them in the house when a ship was "in port," and locking them up at night - for he at one time possessed, like Kararo, a house that could be locked - to protect them from the wild young bloods. But this was a sanitary rather than a moral precaution. Paunu wisely feared contamination from Tahitian sailors and from young men of his own island returning from Fakahina.

The principal tabu is based on consanguinity: one may not become involved with relatives, up to and including first cousins, and perhaps further. In view of the custom of Hawaiian royalty in pre-Christian times to marry within those limits so as to maintain rank by birth, we were curious about this prohibition. From all we were able to learn, it is native and ancient. At any rate, it operates by accepted tradition rather than by external compulsion. It simply would not occur to most people to violate it. In a community of fewer than two hundred and fifty inhabitants, in which most families have become rather closely related in the perhaps eight or nine hundred years they have occupied the island, it may cause hardship. Some young people may be without eligible mates. We were told that this was the case at Tepuka since a number of the young men had gone to Fakahina. This scarcity may account for possible clandestine infringements.

As in other communities, some of the old customs have worn away with the impact of foreign influence and the changing times. As Ngohe and Maukiri told us, the ceremony of piercing a girl's ears as a community recognition of her maturity is no longer observed, or has lost its former significance, though the corresponding ceremony in the case of the boys still exists.

Such, in general, seems to be the organization of that phase of life in the Tuamotu. Customs vary somewhat from island to island; the more sophisticated communities have adopted more pretense, in response to ecclesiastical and other foreign influence, but the underlying pattern is the same.

On other islands, too, more or less secretly on some of them, the young people meet by the shore, on moonlight nights or on wide nights of stars, to dance, and fade two by two into the shadows as the chant goes on. Their elders, if they do not, as at Tepuka, encourage them, tacitly ignore the young people's experiments. The church now and then attempts to interfere, but this

seems to be the last of Polynesian customs to go. Under the moon and stars that have known all peoples and all gods, the pagan love-dance circles on. The old folk, remembering their own youth, nod their heads indulgently and talk about the weather. Has it not been handed down from the sayings of wise men who talked with the gods in the elder time, that "all things created by Tané are good and beautiful"?

26. The Lagoon Yields Food - and Wounds

MORNING AT TEPUKA is a draught of freshness and clean beauty. Long before daylight, cocks have been crowing noisily from the thatched roofs of the village. As the darkness begins to fade and the first faint streaks of lighter color appear on the horizon, the quality of the roar of surf on the reef changes, too subtly to be distinguished by an unaccustomed ear, but carrying a summons as clear as that of an alarm clock to the people of this South Sea island where time is still recorded by its ancient denominators the sun and stars, the wind and tide.

As light begins to filter through the fronds that spread a dense shade over the sanded street, there is a stirring in the houses. Men rise and stand in their doorways, looking out toward the sea, their weather-wise eyes and ears and skins testing delicately the promise of that day's fishing. Women comb long glossy-black or reddish-brown hair, rinse their mouths with coconut water, roll up the sleeping mats and stack them in a corner for the day. Younger girls, red loin cloths swinging about their sturdy hips, step down the street, stealthily or jauntily according to their humor, their bare brown feet stirring noiselessly the fine white sand - going home from the mats of their lovers, in the dawn.

Kararo, his face keen beneath his graying hair, inspects his spears and lines, and sagely sniffs the wind. Little Riua manipulates a long hooked pole, bringing down a young coconut for her breakfast. Tiny blond-haired Maruia, an old flour sack twisted about her middle, dances merrily over the broken coral of Kararo's dooryard, whirling a knife almost as long as herself. The nuts crash down around the little girls; deftly they chop off the ends, and lift the nuts to their lips for long, cool draughts of the life-giving juice. They cleave the nut apart, scoop out its jelly-like meat with bits of husk, and toss the remains to the clean, lean pigs that crowd up for their share.

There is little breakfast at Tepuka. That land lives from day to day, and food is scarce until the men return from fishing. Teuru te Po, perhaps, chews a bit of dried tridacna clam. Pakiuma, in the chief's house, takes down from a rafter a piece of boiled shark left over from the night before. Tanerairua nibbles a wedge of half-dried copra. But there are drinking-nuts and the sweet young flesh of the immature coconut for all.

Teuri, always one of the first to sea, drags his dugout canoe to the water. Nobody calls out to wish him luck with his fishing; if anybody were so tactless, Teuri would turn back and not go to sea. It is very bad luck to mention such a matter.

Other canoes push out, and lie in a long row off the shore, with lines cast deep for tuna or floating on the surface for flying fish to be used as bait - a seven-inch fish cut in two slices and tied on either side of the large hook, wrapped between two stones; the hook then tied with a slip knot and released at about fifty yards' depth.

By this time the village is astir with life. Women go about their household tasks, and children run laughing and shouting in the street, playing games not very different from those of our own country, though with ruder materials.

In such a morning I walked out into the shade-dappled streets. Teingo, the chief's wife, and women of her household were weaving mats of long strips of cured pandanus leaf, such as hung in heavy coils on every house wall. In and out they plaited the strong, pliable material, gossiping as they worked.

Turina and Tetahoa were washing clothes on the bare ground of Turina's land - not rubbing, as in America, or beating the clothes with a paddle or club, as in France and Tahiti, but dipping the garments in an oil tin of fresh cool water, coating them with the strong yellow laundry soap from Ah Kui's store, and wringing them out repeatedly till clean. As the clothes were rinsed and wrung, they were spread on the broken coral, their corners weighted down with bits of stone to dry.

Tukua, the chief's eldest daughter, was burning coconut shells, on the land of her grandparents, to make charcoal. Ngohe, her grandmother, tottered out to help, as I stopped to greet Tukua. Withered and ancient, her back bent beneath the years, Ngohe's wrinkled face was bright with love as she fed bits of shell into the fire of husks and spread the coals with a branch. Even in age, her sunken features bore still a lingering trace of the barbaric beauty that blossomed now anew in her sturdy grandchild.

Tukua, with a steady hand, picked up the cooling pieces of charcoal between two bits of shell which she used like chopsticks, and filled the large iron; then laid a mat on the ground and ironed clothes, steadily, unhurriedly, while Ngohe chopped young coconuts for the pigs and fowl.

Tauhoa called to me from the doorway of Maukiri's house.

She was plaiting a hat of pandanus leaf. She had finished molding the tall crown around a block of smoothed coconut wood, and slipped a band of twisted pandanus leaf around it to hold it in place while she wove the broad rim. Scraping the long strip of dried leaf with a shell, smoothing it with a bit of wood, she wove swiftly and skillfully in and out, holding down the edge with a broad bare toe, to make the light, strong hat that is the pride of her family. Wear one of Tauhoa's hats in any place where there are people from Tepuka or Tepoto, and they will recognize it.

"It is a good hat," they will say. "One of Paunu's daughters has woven it."

Tauhoa stretched her plump, tawny-white arms, and sighed.

"I cannot offer you food," she lamented. "There is none in the house. I have not even a drinking-nut."

"I have eaten," I replied, as is the custom.

But Tauhoa, this time, meant more than mere courtesy.

"I am hungry," she announced.

"Let us go to the lagoon," I suggested, "for shellfish."

I had eaten the tridacna clam, both raw and cooked, but I was curious to see just how it was gathered. She accepted the suggestion, and without waiting to change her dress, picked up a short spear and a small knife. We walked toward the lagoon, stopping for my diving-glasses and light fishing shoes.

Arriving at the lagoon shore, I discovered, with some dismay, that I had brought along two right shoes and no left and as they were of the Japanese style with a split toe, they were not reversible. Not wishing to go back, lest Tauhoa abandon the notion of going fishing at all, I laid the shoes under a stone and followed her, barefooted as she, across the shallows.

With the consideration that these people always showed after they learned how tender are the feet of the white men, she took my hand and led me by the easiest ways. We walked to the south, sometimes crossing exposed land, sometimes wading ankle deep in the warm water. Fortunately most of the bottom was sand. Now and then she warned me:

"Go softly; here are sharp rocks and shells."

The sand of the shallows was pitted with crater-like burrows, recalling the gopher-holes of American prairies.

"Things that crawl on the ground," she explained, "large things."

As nearly as I could gather, she was saying that these holes were made by a long snakelike creature that lives in the sand - not an eel, for she added that they did not bite, having no teeth, or none large enough to inflict damage. She was unable to point out one of them, but I concluded that it was perhaps a large marine worm, a water-snake, or an elongated variety of sea-slug.

"We'll go to Oninganinga," she said, "and join Fangu."

The lagoon stretched before us like a canvas upon which some imaginative artist had painted a fairyland scene.

After a walk of half an hour or so, we came upon a great bend in a partly enclosed pool. Tauhoa stopped and pointed out, against the sun, a mound of shells far out in the lagoon.

"There is Fangu. Swim to her. I go to the forest to get drinking-nuts."

Fangu, with a spear, stood beside a basket half filled with shelled tridacna. She held out a hand to help me land on the curving slope of shells. I walked gingerly over them, step ping on their rough, thick backs.

The phrase "diving for shellfish," and the sight of the children diving in the pools near the village, where the tridacna had been thoroughly fished out of the shallower places, had misled me, and I still supposed it was necessary to dive for them. Adjusting the water goggles, I went down, head first, as I had been accustomed to do, and peered about in the green gloom beneath the quiet water. This proved to be an ineffective method. Not being accustomed to this sport, I misjudged the distance and missed the clam embedded in the

sand, thus roiling the water and destroying the visibility.

Fangu laughed heartily.

"It isn't necessary to go so deep. There are plenty in the shallow places."

She showed me how it was done, wading about in the shallows and producing the shellfish with puzzling celerity, until I detected her taking them from a collection in her pareu and palming them as if freshly caught - one of Fangu's friendly jests at my expense.

The tridacna lay half buried in the sand, their open mouth slits showing a wavy line of green or blue or purple, strikingly beautiful in the rippling water. As I bent to pick one up, Fangu caught hold of my arm.

"Do not touch the open shell," she said. "If it closes down on your finger, it will never let go. Even a little one can hold you."

She showed me how to work the shells loose from beneath, with the foot, and lift them on the top of the foot or in the palm of the hand, in which position they are harmless.

Soon, however, she went back to the more serious business of hunting where the tridacna are most plentiful - thickly scudding the crevices of reddish-brown coral where the reef lies partly exposed, partly just awash, beside the mound of shells. Walking over the reef, barefoot as she was, she thrust the spear-point into the wavy mouth-slits, twisted sharply right and left, and pried the shell from its position in the rock.

The pile of freshly caught shellfish grew. Fangu took my hand, led me carefully over the mound of shells and made me sit down on a smooth stone beside her where she squatted by the newly gathered clams.

Fangu beat the shells with the iron to break off adhering fragments of rock. Then, holding a clam in the palm of her hand and thrusting the middle finger into the opening at the back, she inserted a small knife between the halves of the shell in front, cut the muscles holding the animal to the shell, and scraped the whole meat loose, throwing the shell on the heap-as shells had been thrown there for generations.

She cut away two small black portions, saying they were bitter, and a tough portion which may have been the gills or perhaps a limb to attach the creature to the rock. She squeezed and shook the meat to wring out the salt water, and handed it to me. The taste was cool and slightly pungent, not unlike that of a raw oyster, but more penetrating. Untying a folded pareu, she brought out a bit of ripe coconut and several of the long, yellow, sweet phalanges of the pandanus fruit.

As we sat on the shell mound, eating and talking, Tauhoa returned with half a dozen small drinking-nuts tied by strips of their husks to her short spear, and the menu was complete. It was a strange luncheon party, on that white heap of shells, under that tropic morning sun. And I thought how many such meals must have been eaten in this ancient lagoon, since the day when Maruia, the voyaging queen, first drew up her canoes on the outer reef and gave the island the name it still bears among her descendants: Tepuka Maruia,

Maruia's forest of puka trees. The puka are few now; the coconuts wave green and yellow fronds over all that coral land, but the dotted lagoon still spreads its rich colors under the sun the shellfish abound in its waters, and the blondest little girl in the village bears the name of Maruia, her ancestor thirty-five generations away. And this day I sat eating tridacna with Tauhoa, my friend, and Fangu, whose name is Song. And who knows whether some of these very shells in the mound on which we sat might not have been tossed here by Maruia herself in that far-off time?

We spoke of these things as we ate the food of Maruia's land and sea.

"Maruia was chief of three islands. Pukapuka is the head of the fish, Tepuka its body, and Tepoto the tail."

"How did Maruia come to this land?"

"She did not come in a dugout canoe, such as our men use for fishing, nor in the Tahitian canoe of planks in which we go to Tepoto. She came in a ship, like the one that lies in a shed at the windward settlement, but much larger - a boat made of curved hewn slabs of wood, sewn together with cords of coconut fiber. It had a tall mast, and a sail woven of pandanus leaves, and the helmsman steered it with a tiller.

"You have seen the small ship at Tematahoa. It is still sound though it has not been used in years. We no longer make the great voyages; our men have forgotten the star-roads on the sky that mark the paths over the sea."

"At Vahitahi, far south from here, I have heard there are three Tuamotuan ships, and the men of that land still voyage in them to Nukutavake and to Vairaatea, many miles away."

"It is true. I have heard men tell, who have been away to sea in the schooners. The men of Vahitahi still sail the ancient ships."

"I will tell you another thing. In Hawaii, in the house where the Americans keep many things of the olden time from many lands, there is a Tepuka boat, and the white men come from far countries and marvel at its construction."

So we talked on, opening more shells and tossing the meat into the coconut-leaf basket. My companions were as solicitous for my comfort as a pair of maiden aunts. Every few minutes one of them would ask whether I was hungry or thirsty, or uncomfortable sitting on the sharp shells. Tauhoa took off her pareu and spread it under me to make a softer seat; Fangu dragged up a drifted coconut for a footstool and covered my knees with a flour sack, that the sun might not burn my supposed tender skin.

Spreading drifted fronds over the shells, and covering our faces, we slept. Awakening and looking out upon the mottled landscape of lagoon, I thought: what can harm this race who are so hardy that they sleep on shells and stones, and relish their food raw from the sea? What cares can harass them? Knowing nothing of offices and desks and machines, they whom none can hold helpless in the chains of their own hunger, with no vital need that cannot be met out of their own land and sea, theirs is a contentment that we, in our more complex and fevered life, can never know. For their sake I could pray that they might

remain so - defended by distance and isolation from the ills that have overtaken their kinfolk in the nearer islands. Free and unharried, they have food, sleep and fulfillment of passion: even the wild beasts, whom we envy, have no more than this.

It was peaceful in that quiet, dreamy place; we had no wish to move. But Turina and little Puré and old Maukiri would be hungry. We set out over the shallows toward home.

As we walked over a stretch of reef thinly strewn with sand beneath very shallow water, I felt a thornlike stab in the sole of my left foot. Something small and sharp crumbled beneath my weight.

"A bit of coral," I thought. "It will do no harm."

The wound became increasingly painful, however, as we left the water and emerged upon a long expanse of dry, hard packed sand and sediment near the village. Something was working into the flesh. When Fangu turned off toward the forest to bring more coconuts and cut a carrying-stick, I sat down to examine the injury. Tauhoa inspected it critically.

"*E mukó*," she pronounced it.

"And what is a *mukó*?

She pointed out a small shell like those in my hatband.

"Something like that."

I gathered that I had stepped on the point of some sharp shell and that it had broken off in the flesh. Tauhoa laid thumb and finger to the spot and tried to grasp the end of the shell, but it eluded her.

Fangu returned, a bunch of drinking-nuts swinging from the carrying-stick over her shoulder.

"Alas, the pain!" she commiserated. "The mukó is an evil thing."

Fangu took the foot in her lap. Tauhoa held it firmly with her hands as Fangu probed the wound with the point of the knife, making a grating sound as the blade struck the intruding fragment of shell. With amazing gentleness, she dug around the thorny thing, using the knife point as a lever, and prying upward, while Tauhoa's ample body rocked with laughter at my half-serious, half-jesting protests.

At last the shell was partly loosened. Placing thumb and finger very carefully to the wound, she drew out the intruding substance with a sharp movement, and held it in the palm of her hand for me to see. It was a tiny thing to have caused such pain - a mere fragment of brittle tubular shell, looking not unlike some small hard fungus growth.

"The wound is deep," she said. "I must probe it further. There are pieces broken off inside."

She dug determinedly with the knife point, then beat the foot with the handle of the knife and with the heel of her hand to dislodge any stray particles and also to stimulate bleeding and thus cleanse the wound.

Tauhoa tore a strip from her pareu and bound up the foot.

"When you get home," she advised, "pour a little warm water into the

wound. You will not die, but you will have much pain. Tomorrow the pain will be greater; the third day there will be itching. But if we got all the pieces out, it will heal in three days."

So we returned to the village, carrying our load of coconuts and clams. Fangu bore the latter to the house of Maukiri, but divided the coconuts with me.

Feeling slightly faint after the minor surgery at Tauhoa's hands and the long walk on the injured foot, I felt that a drink might be indicated. I recalled that a bottle of rum, brought for possible entertainment of distinguished guests, or other emergency, was standing on the house-frame behind a pile of packing-cases, out of sight and reach of chance callers. Putting a hand down in the darkness behind the boxes, I drew out a bottle and took a draught of the fiery liquid. It didn't taste just like rum. I reflected, after replacing the bottle, that Keneti's photographic developer and "hypo" stood in like bottles on the same timber. Had I poisoned myself on this remote island, hundreds of miles from medical help and with no communication? If I had, I would make sure of that drink. Being alone in the house, I took out all three bottles, replaced the two chemical containers, and took a very careful drink of what was surely rum.

Whether the rum acted as an antidote, or whether the developer was non-poisonous, no ill effects followed; moreover, the puncture made by the shell healed without the painful symptoms predicted by Fangu.

"You are very fortunate," said our neighbor Tangia. "The *mukó* often causes much suffering."

Keneti, meanwhile, had cut his finger in opening a can of pineapple juice, and the cut had become infected.

"Keep it covered and do not show it to anybody until tomorrow noon," Roki had directed. "Then it must be opened with two fish bones."

"Noon," being any time from late morning to mid-afternoon, had come, and Roki was here to see that her instructions were followed. She treated the finger - not, however, with a fish bone, but with a needle which had to be sterilized several times, because she kept touching it with her fingers. Roki is not accustomed to foreign sanitation. Bystanders, watching the operation, suggested a tobacco poultice, but Keneti decided to forego that remedy.

After the others had gone, Temae lay on the mat, intoning chants in a low but fairly clear voice.

> "The son is a wanderer," he repeated,
> given to voyaging,
> flying afar like a migratory bird.
> Prostrate with grief,
> the son will weep for the mother.
> The wanderer ... "

The ancient words flowed slowly from his lips - the lament of Huauri for

her son Tahaki when he journeyed to the Great Darkness. Thinking, no doubt, of his own dead son, whose remembered features he fancied Keneti's resembled, the old man intoned the chant - an old man in a faded red pareu, leaning on one elbow on the mat - but in voice and manner deeply affecting, reciting his island's version of one of the noblest poems of his race.

27. I Acquire an "Ancestor"

"YOUR NAME," said Tauria, "shall be Mokio-ariki."

As we had been residents of Tepuka Maruia nearly two months, it was felt that Keneti and I should be adopted into a family and receive names more intimately connected with local history than that of Ri, the friend of Maui, early conferred upon me out of his own plentiful supply of names by our neighbor and guide Tupu, or the Hawaiian translation of my own given name, which meant almost nothing in the Land of the Puka Trees.

There had been discussion as to which family should be permitted to adopt us and what names we were to bear. These are delicate matters; it is necessary to avoid offending any prominent family and to steer carefully between conflicting claims. Kararo, for instance, felt a certain proprietorship in consideration of the fact that we dwelt in one of his houses. The family of the chief had been furnishing us with coconuts, as often as his son Maono-iti thought of it in his father's absence. Paunu's people were our best friends in the two islands. And Temae seemed to extend to both of us the liking he had taken to Keneti because of fancied resemblance to his own dead son. A survey of these possibilities had resulted in the choice of Tehau the peace officer and his wife Teroro-tu as our foster parents. For, in the complex interrelationships of a small community, preserved in long genealogies, Tehau and Teroro-tu were near kin to Kararo's family and through them to the families of Temae and Maono; moreover they were distantly related to Paunu and Maupeke; hence everybody would be satisfied.

For Keneti, the name had been chosen of Tuhoe, seventh in line of descent from Tanu-ariki, a chief who had come to the island from Tahiti long ago, and great-grandson of the original Mokio-ariki for whom Tehau's son had been named.

Tehau was a small, wiry man in middle age, with formidable black mustaches framing a friendly smile. Like many Tepuka people, he showed in feature and build the Caucasian strain that is from ancient times a heritage of the Polynesian. We were fond of Tehau; I had liked him from the moment he boarded our ship to examine the ship's papers and grant "*pratique*."

His wife Teroro-tu, though less prepossessing on first acquaintance, was as friendly and lovable as he. Her somewhat harsh features, and the cracked voice in which she led the singing at the church of the Sacred Heart, belied the genuine kindness of her spirit. Tekava, her sister, wife of Ah Siun, was the only fat woman in the village. Tekava was handsome, in a large way, with melting eyes and long dark hair which she rolled in a huge wave on top of her

head and transfixed with a comb, leaving the sunburnt ends to stand aloft in the strange fashion of the island. Her disposition matched her girth. Early in our sojourn, we had suspected Tekava of designs on us, but later reflected that her apparent interest probably had been only friendliness and curiosity.

Tauria, acknowledged leader of the young men, was a nephew of Tehau and lived in that citizen's house, as did his sister, tiny blond-haired Atera. Tauria was a traveled and educated youth. Some years earlier the community - at the instigation, no doubt, of the priest who was then resident there - had subscribed a fund to send Tauria to school in Papeete. He had gone there aboard one of the infrequent schooners, to marvel at his first sight of high land and vehicles and shop windows. We gathered that Papeete had been too much for Tauria.

"A pandanus hat wasn't good enough for me," he admitted. "I bought a panama. And I wore white shoes and white trousers, like the white men, and wrote with a fountain pen."

In a very few months Tauria had spent all of the fund, and arrived eventually in his homeland, working his way as a sailor. A few scraps of Latin, the English affirmative rendered by him as "Yaas," and, most appropriately, the French word *fini*, clung to him, in the way of scholastic accomplishments.

He had been also at Hikueru, diving for pearls, just before the pearling industry suspended, and had brought home from there the version of the *kotaha* dance which had supplanted the indigenous Tepuka figure of that name.

Altogether, Tauria enjoyed tremendous prestige among the young people.

"We have talked it over," he explained, "and decided that the best name for you is that of Mokio-ariki. Since Mokio-ariki has gone to Fakahina, he no longer needs his name in Tepuka, so the family is willing that you exchange with him, taking his name and giving him yours. If you accept this name you will become a son of Tehau, and will be treated in all respects as one of his family. You may sleep in his house whenever you wish, and eat his food, and the coconuts of Tehau's family land shall be yours.

"I must also tell you," he added with characteristic Tuamotuan humor, "that as you will be a near relative, none of the women of Tehau's family can become your sweetheart."

Borrowing a pencil and paper, he wrote, somewhat laboriously, the following document in Tahitian, which has sup planted the "root speech" as the legal and official language of the island:

"This writing bears witness to our mutual desire, in consideration of our dear friendship, to exchange names; wherefore I this day hereby give you, my friend, this name. My name shall be yours, and your name mine, from this day until the day of our deaths."

I must then sign this document with my American and Hawaiian names, and with the names of my father and grand father transliterated into Tahitian.

Tauria signed for Mokio, and produced a faded snapshot, which he said had been taken by the priest who formerly conducted the island mission. In this picture Mokio-ariki, a stalwart, open-faced young man with amazingly wide shoulders, stood between his pretty sister Teuringa-iti and their brother Tehau the Younger, since removed to Tepoto. I must kiss this picture, and give Taaria a photograph of myself to send, when opportunity arose, to my namesake at Fakahina.

"Since this is the only picture we have, and since Teuringa-iti and Tehau-iti are in it as well as Mokio, we can't give it to you to keep," he explained.

Apparently the "adoption" lost none of its effectiveness from being somewhat mixed with modern innovations such as photography and documentary evidence. The family, at least, seemed to take it quite seriously.

"Let us go now," said Tauria, "to the house of Tehau."

Half a dozen members of the family were sitting on the mats in Tehau's house - a large structure, for that island, constructed of the usual materials, but with a floor of larger and rougher bits of coral than is usual, producing the most un comfortable footing possessed by any house on the island.

Teroro-tu motioned me to the seat of honor - a low stool, doubtless modeled on the temple-thrones of the chiefs, but used in these latter days as a seat for Tehau himself in church. Teuringa the Elder, hobbling stiffly to the center of the room, stood before me and began to chant:

> "Mokio-ariki, enter into your house of judgment
> and take your stand among the chiefs."

One by one, the members of the family embraced me and pressed their faces to mine, laying their noses alongside my own or burying them in my neck. Tauria, who in his wander ings had learned foreign ways, kissed me on both cheeks in the French manner. Little Atera, who hitherto had been shy, running around a corner whenever Keneti or I looked at her, now came up confidently with a grave smile, looking at me steadily out of bright gray-brown eyes, and took my hands.

Sitting in the cool, breezy house, we drank the sweetly pungent juice of young coconuts, Tepuka's only beverage, while Tauria filled a basket with more of the young nuts for me to take home.

Tehau unlocked the chest that stood in the far corner and took out the family book - a notebook such as is used in Papeete schools, filled with writing.

"This is your genealogy," he said. "Later we will make a copy of it for you.

"In the old days, before we learned to write," Tehau continued, "we carried these genealogies in our minds. They were the only way of proving our land rights. If a man or woman claimed right in a certain land, the genealogy was chanted very rapidly by one who knew it well; the chanter stopped suddenly, and the one who claimed the land right must pick up the

line at that point and continue without a break.

"Nowadays we have the writing. We keep the genealogy locked up in the chest. When we give you your copy, be careful never to let anyone see it who is not a true relative."

"I will guard it as would you yourself," I promised.

"You must also," said Tehau, "give Mokio-ariki, with your name, which is to be his, a copy of your own genealogy, so that he may take his place in your family line as you take your place in his."

"I shall do so." And I chanted for them that portion of the *Nibelungen Lied* which mentions "Gunther und Gernod und Geiselher der Junge."

"My ancestors," I told them, "were also chiefs, in the white men's country. There was a dragon, a great lizard that ate men. . . ." And I related what I could remember of that noble tale, while my newly acquired kinfolk nodded approval.

"And now," said Tehau, "I will tell you the story of our ancestor Mokio-ariki.

"He was a chief of this country. His marae was Rangihoa. Mokio-ariki was a blond, like yourself. His wife was Fangu taku-ariki. She too was of chiefly blood, and she was very beautiful.

Now, Mokio-ariki went to the windward side of the island to hunt birds, and while he was there he stayed with a woman called Koa. This would have caused no trouble if Koa had been a friend of Fangu, but she was not. Moreover, Koa was a commoner, not of chiefly descent. So when Fangu heard of it, she was very angry. She went to Tepoto, and lived with Toriu, a chief of that island.

"When Mokio came back from the windward side, she was gone. He ordered out his canoe and followed her. There was great festivity when he arrived at Tepoto, for Mokio-ariki was a great chief. The conch shell blew; there was feasting, and chanting, and the young women danced. He did not recognize Fangu among them at first, for she was so decked out with feathers and ocher ornaments that he could scarcely see her face. At length she danced very close to him, looking straight into his eyes, and laughed mockingly as she swayed her hips before him.

"Mokio-ariki was very angry. He rose from his place and struck her. He struck so hard that she vanished from sight and sank through the earth, down to the Great Darkness.

"When Mokio-ariki saw what he had done, he was sorry. He had been angry with Fangu, but he didn't want to lose her. However, his spiritual power was so strong that he was able himself to descend, living, into the spirit-world to bring her back. Toriu also went to the World of Darkness, but his power was less than the power of Mokio-ariki, and it was Mokio-ariki who brought Fangu back to the world of living men.

"He stayed three months among the ancestral spirits in the *Po*. He learned there the sacred chants that are called *fangu*, and many dances, and after he

came back here, he taught them to the people.

"Mokio-ariki was the greatest of our chiefs since Maruia."

"I will try to be worthy of so noble an ancestor," I replied.

When, much later, I sat with Tupuhoe, the young chief of Vahitahi, in his cement-floored government house on whose broad veranda the guitars were tuning for the nightly dance-

"What were you called at Tepuka?" he inquired.

"Mokio-ariki."

Tupuhoe smiled broadly and surveyed his own expansive body.

"The people of our land," he said, "know also of Mokio ariki. He was a chief with a very large belly. He was a great chief."

28. A Wreath of Shells

"HERE IS A HAT for you," said Tauhoa, with her slow, broad smile.

She had worked all day weaving the narrow strips of cured pandanus leaf to make a fine specimen of the light, strong headgear for which the women of her family are famous.

"But there is no band for it," she added.

She held up a red bandanna that I had given her in the exchange of handkerchiefs which is a symbol of friendship among the people of the island.

'If I cut it here, I can make a hatband of the border."

"Don't spoil it. I want you to keep it. A wreath of shells will hold the hat down more safely in the wind. You have made the hat; that is enough, and I am very grateful. I shall ask another friend to make a shell wreath for it."

She accepted a box of tiny cakes of scented soap as the exchange gift that is always expected in Polynesia, and went on her way. Temata, passing on her way to the well, inspected the hat.

"It needs only," I suggested, "a band of shells to go around it and hold it down in the wind."

"I will make one for you," she offered. "Come with me now, and we shall gather shells."

As we walked down the shore, she chatted gaily, juggling small bud coconuts. Tiring of the juggling, she bit off the end of one and chewed it like an apple, offering another to me. It had a cool, fresh taste, if slightly flat to a Western palate. She herself seemed to relish it immensely.

"I have traveled," she remarked. "I have seen Fangatau and Tatakoto, Amanu, Apataki, Tahiti. Fangatau is a good country; all the houses are of wood."

I objected that coconut-leaf houses were better for warm climate; wooden ones for cold places.

Temata disdained to argue the matter.

"Reao is not a good place," she continued. "The people there are falling to pieces with the Chinese sickness.

"My mat is a Rurutu mat. Rurutu mats cost six dollars and they're not of good quality. They are rough. The mats of Fangatau cost only sixty-five cents and they are better than Rurutu or Tepuka mats. . .

"The ancient name of Tepoto is the Leaping Place of the Souls. . . . Your ship, I think, is safe, but far away. It will be long in corning, because of strong wind."

To make the task easier, I suggested a string of large speckled brown

shells, alternating with flat yellow ones, such as Roki wore; but Temata pointed to a small delicate pointed shell that grew abundantly on the rocks near the sea. Collecting a supply of these, we took them to Tiaki's house, where Temata pierced the shells with a nail. She had no needle such is the poverty of these people - until I brought her one.

A few days later Tukua called me to Tiaki's house to fit the wreath to the hat. Three strands of the small shells made a surprisingly heavy band, which would hold even the broad brimmed sunshade of Tepuka in an ordinary wind.

The next time I picked up the hat, however, it was crawling with small brown ants, attracted by the shells. Brushing them off and spraying the hat with an oil preparation recommended for discouraging insects, I thought no more of it until, a few days later, the house was filled with a powerful odor of decomposing fish. Temata, whether from laziness or in one of her sometimes disconcerting practical jokes, had strung the shells without cleaning out the shellfish within them, and the hat smelled like one of the wreaths of oysters that the women of Reao wear about their necks as a handy food supply.

I threw the wreath on the sand, expecting the ants to return, but the anti-insect preparation was even more effective than advertised. Once thus discouraged, they never came back. So, augmenting the value of one of Kararo's trees by driving a nail into it, I hung the shells there, to let air and sunlight do the work, and walked seaward to gather shells of another kind for a new hatband.

Rangihoa was bright with sun; my feet sank into its heaped sand and crunched among its pebbles of coral and its broken shells. Here and there were whole ones: empty shells of the large dark kind and small white flat cowries. Fishermen in canoes offshore regarded me impassively, as I moved slowly southward along the shore and around the end of the islet, past the streets and the arm of the lagoon that cuts deeply into the land. Fallowing the edge of that canal-like stream, I came upon some of the worst walking I had yet seen, where the storm apparently had picked up the reef and dropped it on the land, and weather had sharpened its fragments to cutting edges. Even there, children were walking barefoot over the needle-sharp rocks, gathering pandanus fruit.

It is surprising how long a walk one can take on a small island. I gave up trying to make a complete circuit of the islet, as the land ahead did not look promising and returned.

Carrying the shells - all uninhabited ones, this time - and a bit of cord on which to string them, I went to Maukiri's house. Tauhoa, majestic and tranquil, was sitting in the amazing native fashion, with her feet close to her body and her knees drawn up, a posture which no white man can endure for more than a few minutes, ironing clothes for Sunday. Fangu, who was working outside, came in with Turina and strung the shells by stuffing them with paper over the string passed through their open sides, producing a handsome garland. They even provided a few shells of their own, but finding

many of these distinctly ripe, threw them out in the yard to dry and be cleaned by ants.

It was a Saturday afternoon, the busiest time for women at Tepuka, when they are preparing clothes and food for the day of rest to follow; yet in their kindness they interrupted their occupations to do me this favor, that I might wear the shell hatband next day.

When they had finished, Fangu took up the ironing and Tauhoa resumed work on a hat, while Turina went out to finish the work in the yard. Tepuka people seldom are idle for long at a time.

So I acquired one more symbol of the island life. And time lengthened, with still no news of the ship that was to take us elsewhere.

29. Isle of Peace

THUS WEEK flowed into week, in contentment shadowed only by two slowly growing anxieties: one for our relief ship, as she became longer and longer overdue; the other for the chief, of whose fate likewise we had no word. During the greater part of the day, time stopped; but when at evening we set down our daily records, dated according to the white man's calendar, it came to us with a shock that, pleasant as life was on the island, we were already late for duties elsewhere.

Even these reminders but nipped briefly at the edges of tranquility, as we became more and more absorbed in the affairs of the community. It is so on such islands. Peace flowed into the spirit. The surf curling over the ruddy reef; the wind in the tall fronds; the sunlight glowing over the rude land - these made our world. Concerns and conventions of that other world receded and lost meaning. The country of the white men became but a confused and troubled dream. Reality, for the moment, was this sun-washed ring of coral, hard and clean in the vast sea.

Imperceptibly we glided into the rhythm of village life; the doings of each neighbor assumed importance in our thought; each minute variation in the pattern from day to day acquired stature.

After the first few days our friends had grown less shy. The carefully washed white shirts, minus sleeve-buttons; the tattered but clean print dresses, appeared less frequently on week days; the more comfortable and suitable pareu was resumed. The children no longer ran from us, but crowded about us, asking to have their pictures taken, begging for cigarette butts, marbles, and onions. Their elders resumed their usual tasks; the men, of fishing and making copra; the women, of weaving mats and hats. Teuri, the acting chief, proclaimed a clean-up week, and all not engaged in more vital duties swept the streets and dooryards with flower-stalks of coconut, picked up loose pebbles from the roads, and spread sand before their doors.

Between times, they besieged us with requests for copies of Hawaiian songs that we sang to them in the evenings or played on Keneti's portable victrola. Only the livelier songs were in demand. The slow, wailing compositions, in which steel-guitars dripped Hawaiian moonlight, and the soaring Hawaiian falsetto were beyond their comprehension. Nor did they care for American songs, especially jazz, which, they said, sounded "like Chinese music." One, however, the tenderest and saddest of all Hawaiian melodies despite its comparatively slow tempo, remained a universal favorite. Men would wake me at night in the communal sleeping-houses of the

windward shore, women would halt me on the streets to sing "King's Serenade," with its lovely lines which they understood: "I search for you, beloved, among the fragrant forest-walls of Puna." Haltingly, they sang it after me, the song they loved most, of all the songs of their far-away kindred in the American isles. Holding a match, once, to the cigarette of the aged widow Kavai, I saw tears in her sunken eyes, the mirror of who knows what memories awakened by that song of a vanished love.

Meanwhile we, on our part, grew more accustomed to the lack of a private life and more at ease under constant observation. For even as we were increasingly accepted as members of the community, we still remained somewhat foreign and strange. Our rite of brushing teeth, and our daily shave continued to draw an attentive audience.

Most enthralling of all our foreign ways were the processes of photography, which we practiced under extreme difficulties. Keneti would get up at three or four o'clock in the morning, when the house was dark and quiet, the water temperature down to seventy-eight degrees or so, to develop film and hang them on cords across the house. In the morning the people would flock around to examine them, exclaiming, "No good," for they had no notion of a negative. To them a picture was a picture. They indicated only the vaguest comprehension when we explained that these pictures must go to Tahiti or even to Hawaii before they could be finished, and that the small size of the miniature films, which disappointed them, would be corrected by enlargement in our own land of wonders. Keneti, meanwhile, was in a frantic state lest they disregard his repeated injunctions not to touch the drying film.

One could almost never be alone, and gradually we ceased to demand solitude, though we always preferred the company of a few to that of many. Once, seizing a moment when most of the villagers were at the evening school, I walked toward the lagoon to watch the moon rise over the shell-islets thinking how I must soon leave the peace of this remote and simple land.

The little daughters of Tohitika, catching sight of me, took my hands and walked with me, chattering, laughing, begging for small gifts. At the shore I sat on the curbing, looking out at the strange, unearthly beauty of the scene, while the two children, quiet now, sat in the road at my feet, reaching up firm little hands to pinch my cheeks and leaning their cool, bare bodies against my knees.

The sound of singing and the throb of a guitar blew faintly down the shadowed street. A party was beginning in the village.

"Why," asked Omi, "do you sit here by the lagoon?"

"Why," pursued Ngaroro, "are you not singing and dancing in the village?"

"I have come to look at the moon over the water."

The children considered this. Perhaps it had never occurred to them that this accustomed scene was beautiful. Yet they, too, felt the spell of the calm evening. Little Omi turned her dark, laughing face up to mine.

"As the moon fades," she recalled some bit of overheard lore, "so fades Hina."

For Hina, after exploring the earth, sailed to where the moon was rising at the sea's rim, and entered the moon country, whence she watches over travelers at night, and the shadows on the moon are a tree from whose bark she makes clothing for the gods. When the moons light dims, Hina sickens and her power wanes - but the moon and Hina always come back to fullness and strength together.

Our household arrangements, too, were a source of wonderment. Keneti had installed a small gasoline stove in a corner of the house, surrounded by cases of tinned food, and we cooked and ate in the house, contrary to native custom. I would have been willing to subsist upon the rude but wholesome native fare, and in part did so. Almost every day some one would give us a slice of red-fleshed tuna or hard, nutty cakes of roasted bread, fragrant with chopped papaya and coconut, baked in wrappings of leaves on hot stones. For drink, we had the young coconuts provided by the chief's son or our landlord, or later our adopted parents Tehau and Teroro-tu. In the three months we were there, we drank little else.

As I passed through the village, people would call from their doorways, "Come and eat." I would reply, as is the custom, "I have eaten." This formality having been fulfilled, they would repeat the invitation, until I realized that they meant it and would be grieved if I refused.

"Eat heartily!" they would insist. "Eat until you are round with fullness."

So I would squat with them around the fire in the door yard, with raw or cooked fish, luscious tentacles of octopus which were the most delicious sea-food I ever tasted; raw or boiled shellfish, pounded shark, bits of ripe coconut and juicy tree-melon, while children ran to hack open great cool drinking-nuts, and women brought bowls of well-water to pour over my hands.

"Is the food good or bad?" the old men would inquire.

"The food is good," I would reply./

And they would answer, nodding approval: "The food of the land is good food."

I soon learned that I was welcome to eat or sleep in any house on the island. After a meal, the mats would be drawn up in the shade, and we would recline, smoking and talking, and drift away to short naps that left one dreamily refreshed.

Ah Kui, the Chinese storekeeper, cultivated our acquaintance as a fellow foreigner in, as I guessed, a desire to heighten his local prestige. For he and his partner, the feeble Ah Siun, seemed to have neither the standing in the community that their countrymen enjoy on most islands, nor the growing dislike that is their portion in Tahiti. Allied, like most of their kind throughout the Tuamotu, to two of the handsomest women of the place, they participated, through them, in land rights; handled copra and negotiated with masters of schooners. But they were not the capitalists that their countrymen are on most

islands. Theirs was a wretched little store; they had little means with which to maintain stocks of goods, and their customers had less wherewith to buy. Tobacco and matches, a few folds of cheap cotton cloth, a few bottles of ill-smelling hair oil, and, after the visit of a schooner, a little flour, rice and grated cassava, were about all they had to offer.

Their association with their native wives was their principal link with the people. Save when a ship was "in port," they took no part in the village assembly; they were seldom seen outside the store, their wives' houses, and the land adjoining. Even in marital association, they were a group apart, preparing and eating their own Chinese-style food in a cooking shack behind the store, while their wives cooked and ate Tuamotuan viands on the coral-strewn ground of their own ancestral estates.

I fancy that Ah Kui and Ah Siun, in their inarticulate way, were lonely. At all events, there was an eager friendliness in Ah Kui's smile as he greeted me from the door of the house which his wife Turina shared with her mother and sisters. That house, too, was in its way a show place, as was ours. For it boasted a great iron bed with brass knobs, which occupied almost half the floor space - the only bed on the island. It was a symbol, rather than an article of use. People lay under it, if the house was crowded, but never upon it. Turina and Ah Kui slept on a mat under an upturned canoe outside, with a dim lantern beside them to keep away prowling ghosts. But the bed was prized as a rare ornament. No doubt it was Ah Kui's ability, in more prosperous times, to provide such foreign novelties, as well as his control of the supply of dress goods, that had won him the favor of the lovely Turina.

Ah Kui was pleased that I recognized the features of the two Chinese generals in the luridly lithographed poster on his wall, which depicted, from a strongly pro-Chinese point of view, events of a few years ago in Manchuria and around Shanghai. In that picture, a Chinese bomber hurled destruction upon Japanese warships, and Chinese soldiers with glistening bayonets were routing the invaders. As I called Tsai Ting-kai and Ma Chan-shan by name, Ah Kui's smile became a veritable sunburst. I could imagine him telling his neighbors later: "The white man knows these warriors; he knows that I come from a great country, a land of conquerors."

He was a Kuomintang man, he said; he had been in Honolulu and imagined that he could speak English.

"Hawaii, too muchee Chinee stop," he remarked in proof of this claim. (See, he prided himself, I am talking to the American in his own language!)

When I whistled a few bars of the "Song of the Jade Princess," his joy was complete. Producing, from some recess of his store, a pile of dusty Chinese records and a few ancient American hill-billy tunes, he spent the rest of the afternoon playing them on Keneti's long-suffering phonograph. Here, in this far country, among a people of whom he never could become quite a part, was the music of home. And as the "Song of the Jade Princess" tinkled into the sub-equatorial afternoon, I recalled the chant that records the compassion of

these gentle islanders toward the stranger in their land:

> "Pity it is for the land of the Chinese:
> the children have no rice to eat.
> The heart is sad from dawn until the night.
> Women, be kind to the poor Chinaman!
> Go, Chinaman, and satisfy your desire!"

Thus I would make the rounds of the village, each day learning more of the language, customs, and mode of thought of the people. Some of the information thus acquired was trivial; occasionally it was authentic new data, clearing up puzzling questions of ethnology. This subject is better left to Keneti, whose specialty it is; I was interested in penetrating into the atmosphere of the place, to discover the secret of its peace - a peace which, I became convinced, proceeded from the simplicity of its life, which admitted so few wants and entailed so few cares. But to do so, I must learn. And my education proceeded apace.

As the islanders realized my eagerness to be instructed, they took pains to teach. "Learn!" they would say, offering a section of ripe coconut or the almost cloyingly sweet haustorium of the sprouted nut, which is their only confection: "Learn the root speech!" And they would give me words - fine, large, mouth-filling words, that I would savor as I savored the island food; learning to say, for example, instead of our dry "Thank you," the delightful expression: "There is joy." Memorizing these words one by one, I wrote them down each day, and the list grew with surprising rapidity. Before the end of our stay I had a vocabulary of more than a thousand words.

The speech of individuals varied in intelligibility. A slur ring, muffled enunciation obscured much of what I heard. But the more thoughtful of our friends took pains to speak slowly and clearly, and to repeat in simpler language if not at first understood.

A detailed record of our days would be a repetition of small incidents: this or that kind of food, a new dance or chant; conversation with this or that old man who remembered pagan times; the arising and adjustment of some dispute in the community, to which we were interested witnesses. We arose at dawn, and walked by the shore, marveling at its peace and beauty; then went together or separately to continue our study of the people, returning at noon for a swim in the lagoon and a meal at home or as guests of some native family. In the afternoon we slept, as is customary, awakening to resume the same business, or to take pictures, on Sundays, of people in their best clothes, that we might photograph them later in a nearer approach to "native" costume. In the early evening we wrote our notes of the day's doings, while the people were at "evening school," for after they returned, there could be no work. The later evenings were gay with singing and dancing, and the midnights solemn with old chants.

One evening at Maukiri's house stands out in memory be cause it brought

me weariness thereafter. It was a strange enough scene: the dimly lit room, its corners and doorways crowded with dark figures sprawling in shadow; that oddly out-of-place device, the phonograph, playing in the lantern light, and we hurrying to keep step with our partners, bare foot on the cool mats, occasionally treading on spectators in the narrow, shadowy place.

"Dance a Hawaiian dance!" they urged.

Our respective versions of the hula were far from harmonious, but our audience seemed not to mind. Keneti changed the record, and the voice of Rudy Vallée rang out upon the Tuamotuan air in "The St. Louis Blues."

"Dance!" our friends demanded. Something special seemed called for. We began shadow-boxing in time to the music, as the crowd shouted delight. Thus encouraged, I improvised upon memories of cakewalks seen in childhood, the mixed Polynesian movements of Hugh Greig's daughters at Fanning Island, and whatever more or less fancy steps came to mind. This proved quite to the taste of the entertainment-loving natives. When, footsore with stamping on the thin mat over the pebbles, I desisted, they demanded repetition.

I was to regret that exhibition, for I never quite lived that evening down. One Hiti, in particular, was so delighted with my "art" that I could never meet him thereafter without being urged to do "the dance you did at Maukiri's house."

We saw men filing nails and hammering them into fish hooks, on stone anvils - hooks after the pattern of the shell or bone ones they replaced, a barbless curve like the curve of a shell. It must have taken great skill to pull a fish out of the water with them, but if the old shell hooks had been barbed they would have broken.

They told us how, with a larger hook and a short line, or with bare hands, aided only by their faith in the power of ancestral spirits, they grapple with huge and powerful sea turtles which those ancestral spirits have guided to them through dreams. Leaping upon the backs of these sea monsters, they steer them, by holding to the flippers, into shallow water and to shore.

Temae showed us how to make the strongest cord his people know, scraping the fibers from a plant of the nettle family and twisting them into a line. He told us how this line is used to tie the bait to an eel hook, while a longer but less tough line sinks the hook with a stone. When the eel is hooked, the sinker line breaks, but the cord made from the nettle holds. When there were no more matches, Tuata rubbed a sharpened bit of wood up and down a larger stick split to expose the dry pith, till a wisp of smoke curled from it, and a thin, almost invisible flame, from which Roki ignited a coconut husk for the cooking-fire.

"Isn't that better," I inquired, "than spending half a franc a box for matches at Ah Kui's store?"

"It is better," Tuata agreed, "but it is much trouble."

This was a desultory life, perhaps, but one that sufficed at the time. And through this maze of small things, definite currents began to take form. We

could detect an obscure rivalry between the clans, reflected in the mutterings of Kararo or the dry comments of Temae. In some way this inner conflict was connected with Maono; in his absence the unity of the tribe seemed to become less firm.

The subtle jealousies extended to the younger people as well. The daughter of Maro, gossiping in our doorway as she stopped to beg cigarettes, revealed a touch of prejudice against other young women: "Temaru has no sweetheart because she doesn't bathe often enough. And Tauhoa consorts with Chinese and sailors."

"It is not true," protested Tauhoa, as we walked together to the lagoon to receive our respective shares of the community papayas. "Who has been telling you lies?"

"How about Esua, the supercargo on the schooner? Did you tell me he was your first lover?"

"Esua is no sailor - he is a white man. Besides, he gave me this dress I am wearing."

But Tauhoa, too, could gossip: "Temaru has never had a sweetheart."

"Why not?"

"She has not fallen in the street."

As an afterthought, Tauhoa added: "Besides, she has many lice. Large ones - as big as this shell."

Gossip in the Tuamotu is indeed frank.

On the low wall before her father's house sat Temaru when I next passed that way. Sharing a wedge of coconut and conversing as far as my ignorance and her indistinct enunciation permitted, I examined the dark, ruddy-tinged hair that waved over her bare bronze shoulders. It was, in deed, densely inhabited. As I picked the vermin off, she showed no embarrassment, looking at me shyly out of wide set brown eyes, as if grateful for this friendly service.

"I would make a new wreath of shells for your hat," she said, but I haven't enough shells."

At all times they were asking, "When will your ship arrive?" For it was expected that our ship would bring home their chief. The singing continued in the street, of nights, in preparation for his coming, while Tangihia, giving a barely recognizable imitation of an old-fashioned drum-major, clowned stupidly with a rude baton.

It was during that interval that I made the social error which, not long later was, according to native interpretation, to cause me much pain. Temata, passing our house one morning on her way home from some nocturnal tryst, called, as she and nearly everybody else did, to beg tobacco. Confident of my increasing acquaintance with the language, I presumed upon it in an attempt to imitate Keneti's facility in making jokes. Jestingly, I inquired of the girl:

"With whom did you spend the night?" - a question perfectly proper in that country.

"With nobody," she replied demurely, helping herself to a liberal portion

of tobacco.

"With Tupu, perhaps?" I persisted.

"Tupu was my sweetheart long ago, but he was no good.

Pahoa. then?"

"Pahoa is very good, but he has another sweetheart."

"Ha! It must have been Tauria!"

To my consternation, the girl cast herself violently upon the ground and wept, and never afterward treated me with the same friendliness as before. I was at a loss to explain the embarrassing effect of my ill-bethought effort at native humor until Tauria himself enlightened me.

"Did you not listen when I told you, long ago in Maké's house, the relationships among the people? Temata and I are near relatives," he revealed.

Tauria launched into a detailed account of the complicated blood relationship between Temata and himself, which I was unable to follow, but I gathered that I had unwittingly done the girl a tremendous wrong. The tabu of consanguinity, I already understood, is almost never violated, being so deeply rooted in community life that no one would think of doing so. It appeared that this was a matter about which one did not joke.

Tauria, with his broader experience of the ignorance of the white man, forgave me readily, but, as I learned, not so Temata. I was to be reminded of that unlucky jest.

But meanwhile, days and weeks slipped on, without prominent incident save the deep, quiet adventure of learning to know a simple, kindly people, into whose life we merged; though out of it arose from time to time those troublesome questions: What has happened to the chief? Where is our ship?

For the day provisionally set, after several forced postponements, as the "final" date of departure, brought no sign of means for that departure. The people had begun to realize that we really didn't know when the *Tiare Tahiti* was coming, and to seek the answer in their own observance of the weather and in more occult ways.

"The wind is from the north," said Temae.

"Your ship will be delayed." "Your ship," said Temata, "is in harbor at Hao or Arnanu to escape storm."

As we later learned, she was approximately right, but how she knew, she never revealed.

But it was pleasant, that afternoon, to lie on the smooth sand, eating the delicate centers of coconut-leaf stalks, looking out over the lightly ruffled lagoon and the merry children; the air full of their happy voices and the water alive with their smooth wet bodies, like brown glistening fish. As I joined them, they hailed me with cries of welcome, diving under me, clinging to my legs or climbing on my back, a chain of them trailing behind me as I swam.

Always hungry, they dived and brought up tridacna, or turned over the weathered shells on the islets to find small black oysters, or caught, with their hands, in the shallows, flat sandfish and small slim horie, cleaning them with

deft fingers and eating them fresh from the lagoon.

Sitting under a tree, later, while Omi ran inland to fetch drinking-nuts, they juggled, made delicate streamers of unopened leaves, wove little playballs out of mature leaves, and compared their tiny breasts to see whose were the most developed.

They appealed to me to judge. Kaupaki, the slim, dark, flashing-eyed daughter of Teuri's wife, clearly had the best claim to the title. But Riua seemed disappointed at the decision. How could I tell her that in five years more her beauty would be a thing to be chanted in gold-brown chant words; that even Huarei, daughter of gods, for whom Moeava voyaged far through perilous seas, could not have stirred men's hearts more deeply than will Riua when she comes of age? Soon enough, little Riua, you will know. He will be a lucky lad who will dance the love-dance with you beneath the moon.

In the beginning dusk, rain fell, and children ran into the street, laughing and shouting, to splash in puddles and feel the wet coolness of the shower on their skins. Older ones came forth, their coppery bodies gleaming with rain above their waist-folded garments. Under a corner of the church, where the water sprayed down in a natural shower bath, they soaped hair and bodies and bathed in the fresh rain. We joined them there, rejoicing in the refreshing shower and running up and down the street afterward to counteract the chill.

In Maukiri's house later, however, we found Puré, still in her wet garment, rolled up in a mat, shivering. She was ill for days. Thus the benefits of "civilized" clothing.

Women were plaiting coconut fronds to make the walls of a new house.

Temae's house was of the genuine old Tuomotuan style: strongly woven of pandanus and shaped like an inverted clothes-basket around its dark and rather close but scrupulously clean interior.

Octopus - commonly called "squid" - when properly prepared is the most delicious sea food of the islands. Hung from branches to dry, they give the appearance of weird foliage.

30. July Fourth at Tepuka

THE FOURTH OF JULY CAME, but it is doubtful whether any but ourselves on the island was aware of it. To our friends and neighbors, it was simply the third day after Sunday, in the nomenclature devised by missionary priests to take the place of the native lunar calendar of pagan times.

The sunlight streamed down through the coconut fronds; the surf hissed and roared on the outer reef; off Rangihoa the waves shimmered in the light, as on any other July day. Women passed to and fro on their way to the well or busied themselves about their household tasks of weaving mats and hats. As I sat at the end of the road on the land of Tupiti, in a gorgeous dawn, watching light squalls move procession-like over the sea, men were fishing from small canoes or chopping copra under the leaning trees. The daughters of Tohitika, on a diagram of squares marked out in the sand, were hopping from square to square and kicking a small stone, in a game which they said was ancient, though a similar one is played in American cities, marked out on sidewalks with chalk. Perhaps it is older than either Polynesia or America. Ngaroro, slim and wild-looking child, with dark waving hair and staring dark eyes, took my hand in her small hard brown one.

"Do you want a wreath of ducks' feathers?"

A little later she came to the house with the wreath, woven of dark and white feathers on a band of stiff pandanus. Before she had finished it, however, Maroma, elfin-like daughter of Varoa, brought a similar wreath, so I had to accept both, giving the children tiny bottles of perfumery in return.

Temae and Ngohe came bringing a knife made from an eel's jawbone, bound upon a wooden handle with a cord of vegetable fiber, and earrings of fragrant fern which Ngohe wore in her ears to be photographed.

Of such little incidents is a day made. Yet, in a land where, to a cursory view, all days appear the same, each coursing of the sun brings its own element of surprise.

An outcry in the street toward the lagoon reached us in the afternoon as we sat searching the meaning of a chant we had heard the night before. Again the shout: "A ship!"

At first we thought our own overdue *Tiare Tahiti* had been sighted, but the movement was toward the lagoon shore rather than toward the sea.

Riua and Tiare, seizing our hands as we leaped down from our coral platform floor, ran with us to the lagoon, where the crowd was gathering. Tauria pointed to the sky just above the coconut trees that marked the farther border of the lagoon. At first I could see nothing. Then, as he directed my

gaze, I could distinguish, faintly, a, line of dark smoke above one of the shallow passes across whose mouths the surf sent up white plumes of spray.

We joined the crowd hurrying over the broken coral to the end of the transverse street at Tupiti, by the open sea. All were speculating upon the identity of the steamship, which gradually came near enough to distinguish the superstructure and the upper part of the long dark hull, by which Keneti and I identified her as a liner of the Messageries Maritimes, out of Marseilles by way of Panama to Tahiti and New Caledonia. The ship rapidly drew away, till her smoke was again but a faint smudge on the horizon. She was the sole reminder, on that day, of a world in which July Fourth marks an event in history.

I turned and faced solemnly my Polynesian friends.

"Four score and seven years ago," I informed them some what inaccurately, in English, "our forefathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition ... "

"What are you saying in the British language?" inquired Takina.

"It is a chant of the land of my birth," I replied, "in praise of the chiefs who founded the American nation."

But at that moment I felt strangely more closely akin to these brown men and women of that Stone Age land, and these great-eyed, laughing, naked children, than to the passengers and crew of that passing ship or to the feverish ways of the disordered world from which it came. On this ring of coral, fed by sea and shore, living from day to day, in the care of the ancestral spirits, we could forget, as our primitive friends never had known, the myriad ways man finds to slay his ease.

And thus the day dedicated to the Spirit of '76 passed, at Tepula Maruia, without benefit of firecrackers. Keneti and I, recalling the pig races of celebrations in our youth, chased a startled porker down the street, to the huge amusement of the villagers. We invited Teuri to dinner and opened a tin of plum pudding in honor of the occasion - garnished with "hard sauce" made by beating up granulated sugar with a vegetable fat ordinarily used for cooking. The deputy chief highly approved this curious substitute. Keneti brought forth a centerpiece of artificial flowers that someone had given him the day we left Honolulu. "What kind of flowers are they? On what plant did they grow? ... Ah" (sniffing) "they have no fragrance ...*Tsia!*" (touching them) "they are false flowers!" I "improved" them by sprinkling a little perfume on the paper petals, much to the merriment of our guest and the young people, Tupu, Tauria and others, who came in later with the sardine tin ukulele, and played that ridiculous instrument and sang.

Our guests went home; the village settled down; the sea wind blew soothingly; there was a pool of quietness, of rest.

31. Wind That Overturns the Land

NOT ONLY our own ship, but the copra schooner as well was overdue. Either or both, we knew, might have been wrecked for we had no means of obtaining news. We might have to remain indefinitely - in itself no hardship, but disconcerting to other plans.

We could see surf breaking at the far end of the atoll, foam dashing high above the land, nearly five miles away. At our end of the island, a strong current roughened the waves. We realized dimly what it must be like when a hurricane sweeps down and the sea pours into the village - smiting, tearing, grinding away the very soil, down to the bare bones of the island.

"It comes," said Temae, "when the spirits of the sea are angry. I was in middle age when the sea last drowned this land.

"The wind blew from the north. Waves climbed higher and higher on the reef, growing all day, till they spilled over into the lagoon. That was only the beginning.

"We fastened everything down as well as we could canoes, houses ... tied them to trees. For ourselves, those who were wise chose trees that were strong and deeply rooted, and climbed into them when the water covered the land. We cut off the tops, so the wind would not tear the trees away as we clung there. . ..

"You cannot know what that wind was like, until you have felt it. We saw the roofs of houses fly down me streets and through the forest; the walls flew after them. Only my house stood, the true Tuamotuan house, built low and canoe shaped, woven like a basket, after the fashion of our ancestors. All the new, modern houses, like Kararo's house in which you are living, went down.

"And the sea came ... tearing away the foundations, digging out the roots of trees while the wind whipped away their tops...

"How high did the water rise?"

"In this part of the island, there was no more land. The trees in which we clung were as if growing out of the sea; the waves leaped at the lower branches, and the trunks bent in the wind. All night we stayed in the trees, and in the morning the wind stopped, but there was still sea over the land. Then the wind came from the south.

"We were wet and hungry and cold. You would not think we could have lived through that time. Only the tops of trees showed there had ever been an island - and many of the trees were gone.

"At last, the water flowed back to the sea - but there was nothing left. Houses, stone pigpens, bathing-walls, food-platforms - everything swept

away. Only, as I have said, the strong old-fashioned framework of my own house still stood.

"Pigs, chickens, dogs - not a trace of life, except those of us who had clung in the trees. Fifteen were gone. Of most of them we never even found the bodies. . . .

"We were hungry. There was no fishing for days, and our canoes were torn away and broken to pieces. There were still a few young coconuts and pandanus fruit clinging to some of the stronger trees, and shellfish in the lagoon, and we lived on them until the government ship brought food from Tahiti.

"We built our houses again, and new canoes, and the government gave us new pigs and chickens. We planted more coconuts. But for a long time, life was very hard. There was no more copra until the young nuts matured.

"Some of the land itself was destroyed. And what land was left, was changed. . . . Before the storm, we had sand all over the village. Now, look - "

As we well knew, everywhere, even deep in the interior, broken branches of coral, blackened with weather, lie strewn over the land. But this harsh soil was their own; holding to what the sea had left them, Temae and his stout-hearted kin folk picked up the tattered strands of their lives and wove them together anew as the women weave the leaves of the coconut and the pandanus. Storm will come again, though it has been thirty years since the last one. But the people of Tepuka have food and shelter for today. There is nothing they can do about it, save to choose stout trees, when the storm comes, in which to cling.

"Why don't they build sea walls?" asked a high-island man, in Honolulu. He had not seen these atolls, only a few feet above the sea; the ruins of stone buildings at Anaa; the old temple sites at exposed places on Tepuka and Tepoto, where every stone has been torn away by furious waves.

"They might build concrete refuge platforms," suggested Schenck, at Vahitahi. But it is extremely doubtful whether even these would stand before the onslaught of a real hurricane, and the bombardment of huge blocks of reef-coral hurled high on the shore in the sea gods' rage.

The wind was from the north. Perhaps a hurricane was blowing up, and would strike us there.

32. The World Intrudes

A HUGE SPIDER danced deliberately toward me as I lay, a week later, on the mat in Tiaki's house, resting after a meal of roasted bread and octopus tentacle. As I moved to throw the creature outside, Tiaki stopped me.

"Don't hurt it," she cautioned, "or you will die!"

Gathering the monster carefully in her hand, she laid it on my chest, whence it stalked, with the dignity of a chief, to disappear in the shadows.

"It is a sign that your ship is near," she said.

Outside her door, Temae greeted me as he returned from fishing.

"Our chief is on his way home," he declared. "The sky has been overcast, without rain, three days. It is always so, when Maono nears an island. He will come any day now."

That was the eve of an event we had almost ceased to expect.

The next day was the fourteenth of July, but the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille received only slightly more recognition than that of the birth of the American republic, ten days before. It was observed by formal raising of the French flag before the chief's house, while two of his children drummed furiously on a gasoline tin.

Keneti and I, to add our part to the celebration, sang as much as we could remember of the Marseillaise, which was more than anybody else on the island could do.

People resumed their usual occupations, and the day proceeded like any other Saturday.

"We are lucky," commented Keneti, "to escape a big celebration, with speeches and the obligation to make a gift every time our names are mentioned. That's what would happen at most places in French Oceania."

I was sitting under a tree, seaward, when the news came tasting the beauty of the scene: the dark red shore, over which the sea spilled lacy-white foam, the sun-washed sand and dark palm-shadows upon it, all this land and sea that had grown, in the past few months, familiar and dear.

"A ship!" the children shrilled in the streets. Teuri ran to the shore, followed by other men, to confirm the report.

I could scarcely credit it at first. But steadily, with white sails curving full, the cutter came nearer, till I could recognize the *Tiare Tahiti*, come for us at last. Men and women scanned eagerly the figures aboard. Where was Maono the chief?

A boat wallowed through the surf, depositing on the reef a Tahitian sailor and Bob, owner of the *Tiare*. Teuri anxiously questioned them for news.

"Maono and Maehanga are on their way here, aboard the *Vaite*. They were at Makemo before we were; they should be here in a day or two. Stimson and Schenck are at Vahitahi. There's a strike in San Francisco, and there has been no mail at Papeete for two months.

"It took us twenty-three days to get here from Papeete. Tacking north, tacking south; our chart-log zigzags all over the map. But we've brought you a case of terns' eggs from Kauehi."

All who could leave their Saturday afternoon tasks crowded at the crossroads to gaze upon the new arrivals, as we awaited Keneti, for whom Teuri had ordered a smoke signal made and sent boys to summon him from the forest where he sought ruins. As the news spread through the village, we heard further rumblings of that underlying clan rivalry that we had detected vaguely before.

"Maono is in jail," the rumor ran.

We traced it to Kararo and his son Tangihia, whose purpose in starting the canard we could not fathom. They claimed to have a letter containing this statement. In vain we tried to explain that the chief, far from being in jail, was at that moment on a schooner bound for his homeland; that he had been entertained at Makemo as befitted his rank, and in all probability would be with them the next day. Doubt still lingered.

Ah Kui dropped another unexplained bit of information. The *Vaite*, he said, had skipped Tepuka and Tepoto on this trip, doubtless leaving Maono at some midway point to be picked up later. How he knew this, was another mystery.

Temae, however, continued steadfast, pointing still co the rumor in the sky. Tehau and Teroro-tu had called to take leave of us before embarking in a canoe for Tepoto, whither they had been summoned by smoke signal. Their son was ill there, they said; whether this detail had been communicated by the smoke, or they knew by other means, I never was quite sure. We remarked that the weather was threatening, and that it might not be safe to travel by canoe.

"There will be no storm," Temae reassured them and us. "Those dark clouds," he continued, repeating his earlier prophecy, "are only the sign that Maono is near."

The *Tiare* brought not only news but gifts: a box of scones and a bottle of wine from friends in Papeete. Acting Chief Teuri dined with us in state, remaining afterward, quite without embarrassment, to wash the dishes.

So the feverish world outside descended upon us with word of strikes and lockouts, of prices and exchange - yet, as evening crept gently over the land, the island life surged up; there was singing in the street; Tau, the sailor from the *Tiare Tahiti*, danced the love-dance opposite Fangu on the stony sand.

I slept that night on a mat laid upon dry coconut fronds under two trees on Temae's land. Starlight filtered through the palms; the long drum roll of nearby surf sounded through the night; the coconut midribs and pebbles under

the mat were palpable, but, with the inurement of experience, not uncomfortable. It was good to lie thus close to the land, under the friendly stars. A confused murmur came from Tiaki's house, whence could be distinguished the harsh voice of Tangia and the thin cry of new-born Teahio-ariki; from the other side, the ghostly mumbling quaver of Temae, chanting. The slow breeze, the coolness, the freshness of low island air were infinitely soothing. I awoke, as birds cried seaward and cocks crowed from the thatches, to watch the dull glow brighten the northeast.

We breakfasted royally on eggs of the sooty tern, those birds we had heard overhead on that first starry night at Maké's house. The eggs were fairly large, speckled, with red dish, sweet meat, and of remarkable keeping qualities. They were weeks old when we got them, and we ate them for two weeks more; only those spoiled that had been broken in the box.

"How much would it cost," inquired Kararo, "to charter your ship to go to Pukapuka and bring back a shipload of those eggs?"

Despite Temae's interpretation of the weather, rain squalls blew up toward noon of the next day, and questions were raised anew as to the chief's probable arrival. As Bob and I greeted Roki, where she was pulling down young coconuts for her pig, she told us she had had no food since the day before. So he invited her to lunch aboard the cutter, which was beating slowly up and down in the lee of the island.

Squatting in a cold drizzle of rain over corned beef and yams, Roki was so disturbed by the ship's motion that she could not eat, even in the fresh air. Moved by her forlorn appearance, we landed again, whereupon she revived sufficiently to give a striking demonstration of Tuamotuan appetite. At the house, she ate a dozen terns' eggs, a pound tin of corned beef, three sweet potatoes, a large onion, and some warmed-over taro and yams, and drank a tin of pineapple juice, before indicating satiety.

"My stomach," she confided, "is in pain."

"From the food?"

"No, it is sore with grief because you two are going away. There are," she enlightened my ignorance, "three minds: one here, one here, and one here" - pointing to her head, to the region of the solar plexus, and lower in the abdomen.

Keneti, returning from a last excursion with Temae in quest of information about the ancient ceremonies, was besieged with requests for passage aboard the *Tiare Tahiti* to the neighboring island of Tepoo. He was disposed to agree, since the absence of a number of natives would free him from many interruptions in the work he had still to do. Our unexpected longer stay on the island had revealed additional information which he was eager to complete by conferences with a few trusted informants.

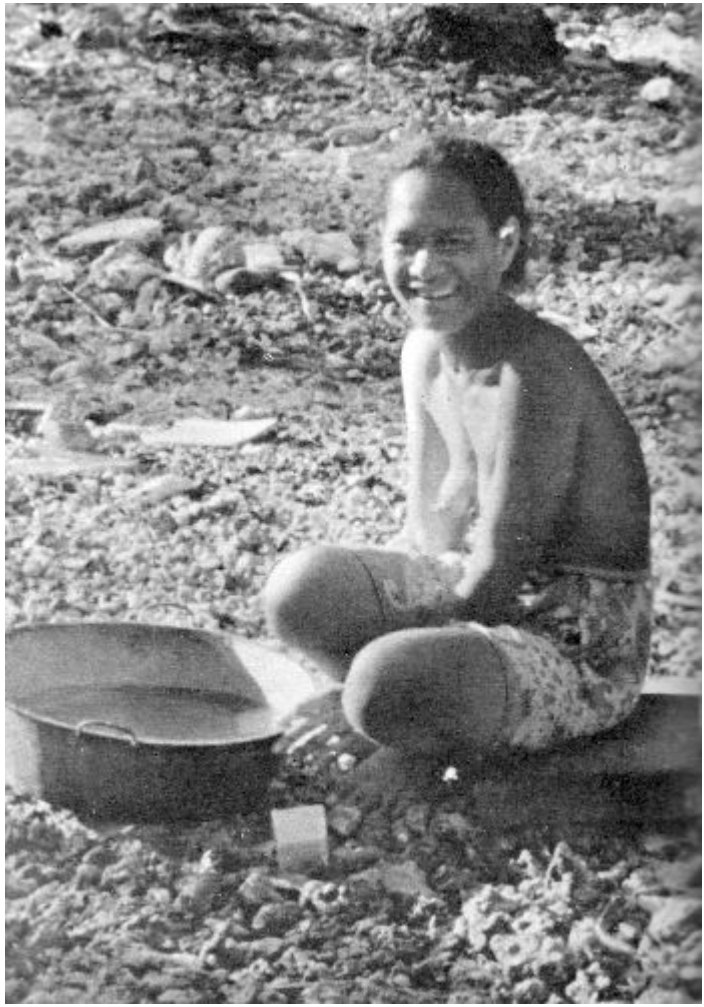
Skipper Bob announced that he could carry twelve, and it took the better part of a day, in conferences with Teuri and others, to sift the applicants down to approximately that number. One Varoa, in particular, insisted that all his

family must go. For he was giving up residence on Tepuka, and would make his home at Tepoto. He sat for hours, waiting patiently, until Keneti yielded.

It was decided that I should accompany the party, to fulfill certain missions for Keneti, carry our greetings to friends on the other island, and interpret for Bob, who, though he spoke Tahitian, found difficulty with the rugged Tuamotuan dialect.

As we emerged from the lagoon on the day before sailing, I noticed a slight eruption on the back of the little finger of my left hand. Dabbing it with a drop of iodine, I dismissed it. With acclimation to the island, our early excessive fear of infection had abated; we had had so many small injuries which had healed without complications that, although we still ob served the forms of precaution, we had ceased to be deeply concerned. I was to regret that lapse. But there was no thought of it in my mind as I sat that night listening to the singing and looking forward to Tepoto.

"Temata, daughter of Maru, has made witchcraft."



Tinaia, the wife of Toriu, shared with him the mysteries of Tuamotuan medical skill.

33. Leaping-place of Souls

THE *Tiare Tahiti* boomed briskly over the bright water, passing, just before we reached the red reef of Tepoto, the two canoes that had set out just ahead of us across the turbulent channel.

The narrow decks of the forty-foot cutter were thronged so thickly that Bob's Tahitian sailors could scarcely move about to work the ship. Bob's "dozen," interpreted to include as many heads of families, with wives, children and livestock, amounted to nearer forty.

Tepoto, known in the ancient chants as "Tepuka of the west," lies, according to the charts, five and a half miles, but in reality some eleven or twelve, west-northwest of Tepuka. It is a smaller land, about a mile in diameter, almost circular in shape, an old atoll, slightly raised, whose lagoon has vanished. The pilot book describes it as bordered with precipitous cliffs. It is, however, a low island, of the same coral formation as Tepuka; the "cliffs" described by an early missionary observer are blocks of coral hurled up on the beach by storms, and uprooted sections of old beach, tilted on end by the same force. Wilkes describes its appearance from the sea, a hundred years ago, as "like a round knoll . . . owing to the trees upon it," which is true today. It is a greener land than its eastern neighbor; more of its native forest is left. It has the same red border, the same inner line of gray old beach, then white sand, and behind that the green bulging dome of the forest.

The wind was with us, and the voyage took only a little more than two hours for the clean-sailing *Tiare*. Even so, most of the children and several of the elders were seasick; several hats went overboard after use as emergency slop buckets by those who, because of the crowd, could not get near the rail. Varoa, his wife and seven children were among the deck load. Little Maroma laid her pretty face on the deck, her nose against a crate of live chickens, and clasped a pet pig to her childish bosom. Merearíki, wild-haired and savage-looking, sat impassively, her sharp breasts protruding, as Ropati said, "like headlights" through the rent cloth of her worn-out dress.

"Come to Paunu's house," invited Tauhoa, who was one of our passengers, and two boys of the family led us there. It was a new coconut-leaf structure, airy and clean, with a sleek new coconut-leaf floor mat; near it stood a Tuamotuan house of the older type like that of Temae. Both stood near the sea and facing it, a little to leeward of the main village, as does Paunu's house at Tepuka.

Here was Paunu in his own country - that vigorous, instantly likable man with strong Caucasian features and red dish curling hair. Maupeke his wife

greeted us, a withered dark woman who looked like a twin of her sister Maukiri, as she may well have been. So did assorted children and relatives, among them an incredible, fairylike blond little girl with her father's curly hair lightened to rosy gold, and an equally incredible and rather absurd baby, even blonder and redder-haired than she. Three young women were presented as Paunu's daughter Tioma and her cousins Tefakarava and Tepaina.

These sat at a little distance, maintaining an amusing re serve. Tepaina was a slender girl, of somewhat severe but comely countenance; Tefakarava, a chubby golden-brown creature with flowing dark hair framing a round, dimpled face from which great brown eyes looked between lashes of amazing length and thickness. Tioma, a little taller, more slender, bore in more delicate form the finely chiseled features of Roki, with Tauhoa's darker hair tinged with ruddy lights, and a clearer tone of her tawny-olive complexion. The nose, straighter and narrower than those of most of these people, had just a hint of a downward curve at the tip, lending to her features an imperiousness enhanced by her general demeanor of queenly dignity. Tioma combined in unusual harmony the best features of two Polynesian types sometimes labeled, from their resemblances, "Caucasian" and "East Indian." All in all, she was the most beautiful girl we saw in that summer's voyaging.

They led us to a mat near the old-style house, and brought drinking-nuts and a great slab of raw red tuna. As Bob would have none of the latter, it was for me to uphold the courtesy of our party. With his sheath-knife I cut away the outer crust, upon which clustered innumerable flies, and ate a liberal portion of the clean inner meat, with bits of ripe coconut for seasoning. The social situation thus saved, Tauhoa, who had accompanied us as a sort of personally conducting guide, poured water over my hands - the Tuamotuan style of finger-bowl - and brought more drinking-nuts.

The unconscious poverty - and therefore riches - of these people was continually being brought to mind. Aboard the *Tiare* where Tauhoa accompanied us for dinner, she carefully scraped all the leavings into an empty tin.

"Throw it overside!" suggested Matini.

Tauhoa was shocked.

"I'm taking it home for the children."

The struggle for life on a scanty soil has bred in the Tuamotuan an economy that countenances no waste.

As we sat in the early, evening before Paunu's house, the darkness closed down over Tepoto like a kindly hand, smoothing away the weariness of day. Stars burned over the sea; among them the riding lights of the *Tiare Tahiti* glowed faintly where she lay off, out of reach of the reef and the uncharted shoal that stretches a wicked claw for a mile and a half northwest of the island's point.

Talk hinged upon the topic nearest the heart of these islanders at the time, the expected return of Maono. There had been disappointment that he had not

been brought by the *Tiare*, the port authorities having refused permission. Tangihia's false rumor of Maono's "imprisonment' had spread by canoe to Tepoto. So we had to relate the true story for each new arrival, of whom there was a steady stream.

Teuru was especially interested in Hawaii: What was the Hawaiian word for this and for that? What food was eaten in Hawaii? What fruits grew there? What was the fashion of their canoes and paddles? What fishes swam in those waters and what beasts thrived for food upon the land?

There was talk, too, of the weather, that unfailing topic in all lands, but of practical importance in this country of fishermen and canoe voyagers. It is often stated that the Polynesians, inhabiting mainly countries of mild climate, have no word for weather. It is probably true that in most dialects they have no general word for it, but there is an infinite vocabulary of words for specific aspects of weather, as any one who has heard the chant of the Road of the Winds can testify.

There was singing. I must sing songs of Hawaii, and illustrate, haltingly as I might, the hula. Then I must show off the dances learned at Tepuka. I must even recite those useless numerals.

Time is a matter of relative, rather than absolute, duration. I never saw a clock on Tepoto, and though Ah Kui had one in his store at Tepuka, I never saw anyone consult it; indeed, I am under the impression that its hands always stood at half past two. Years are counted, now, according to the Christian era, but, I suspect, somewhat vaguely. One young woman, on being asked her age, replied, "Nine years." As she was obviously a grown woman, the inquirer pressed her for the source of this information.

"How do you know you are nine years old?"

"The priest told me."

"When did he tell you that?"

"When I was a child."

Similarly, our good friend Roki, on the occasion of her first call to welcome us to Tepuka, remarked that she remembered Keneti from his brief visit there five years earlier.

"But I don't remember you," he admitted.

"Ah, then I was a child, peeking under the thatch of your house, but now I am fourteen years old and" with simple pride, as indicating maturity - "I have had sweethearts."

As a matter of fact, Roki was at least eighteen.

Mokio the elder told us he was fifteen years old when the first missionaries landed at Tepuka. If this was true, Mokio was at least ten years older than he looked - and it is not usual in the Tuamotu for an elderly person to look younger than his age.

Annoying as this indefiniteness might have been in other circumstances, I found it delightful, a pleasant indication of the atmosphere of a land where time mattered so little as to be practically negligible. In practice, the time of

day, if there was any need for it, was determined roughly by the position of sun or stars, the turning of current and tide. I have heard natives say it was "dawn" when not a ray of light was yet visible. Asked how they knew, they replied:

"By the sound of the surf on the reef."

And they were right, these children of sun and sea: within a few minutes the sky had lightened perceptibly even to me.

So I do not know whether we talked early or late, on the mats in front of Paunu's house, under the thickly-sown stars. Paunu, with a hospitality which it would have been churlish to refuse, had invited us to spend the night ashore, and we slept in Polynesian fashion: family and visitors in one long row across the breadth of the house, heads on the pandanus log that served as pillow, a mat thrown over us as coverlet. It is surprising how soundly one can sleep in that rude-appearing manner; after a few months at sea on a sampan and a few more on coral islands, one becomes accustomed to many things.

Inland Tepoto is as beautiful a place as Wilkes imagined it, with fairylike landscapes of open glades, riotous thickets of shrubbery, and tall groves of trees. The site of the former lagoon is a slight depression in the center of the island, covered over with grasses and herbs. The boys showed us there a shallow water hole, beneath a broken shell of old lagoon-bottom: "the navel of the land."

The well of the village, however, is situated more centrally to the habitations, behind the only store, which is also the only wooden building. Kept by a brother-in-law of Teuri, this store is an exception in the Tuamotu. There are no Chinese on Tepoto. It is a pleasant land, and more fruitful than Tepuka, with many swine and fowl. A thick scrub of papaya plants had grown up in the sand at Paunu's door step, from seeds cast there as his children ate the fruit. Fish apparently are as plentiful in the offshore waters, though there is no lagoon from which to take shellfish. Remains of great ovens in the sand testified to abundance of turtle.

Paunu and Teuru showed me the site of the principal marae, which, like one we had seen at Tepuka, had been de stroyed by the last hurricane. It was a desolate enough spot, surrounded by turtle ovens, a waste of broken beach, with not a stone remaining recognizable. Seeing my interest, my hosts led me on a walk around the island, about an hour's tramp. One merry-faced, plump, square-headed lad ran off into the bush and came back with a young white tern which roosted contentedly on his head as he continued the walk. Toward one end of the island we came upon a marae in a fair state of preservation, many of its upright slabs still standing.

"The names of these stones," explained Paunu, "have been kept with us, although the marae has not been used for many years."

It was a strange feeling, to stand in the bright wind-washed sunlight among these ancient stones, which had seen so many sacrificial slaughterings of turtle and of fish, and heard so many ancestral chants. It was not difficult to

imagine Paunu himself, or Teuru, clad in pandanus mat, feathers in ears and hair, sprinkling ceremonial sea water over the sacrifice, and holding a bunch of twisted leaves to catch the blood.

Paunu's house was crowded the second night, when gusts of rain drove inside many relatives who had been sleeping out of doors. Nearly all were wakeful; there was some singing, and much arguing about the proper phrasing of one of the songs for Maono: whether it should be "you two," as sung, or the singular number. This dispute went on for a long time, despite the fact that everybody knew Maono had been accompanied by Maehanga.

I gave little heed to the hubbub. The infected finger with which I had rashly started from Tepuka had become painful. Tetama, wife of Takina, and Panitaka, wife of Varoa, had proposed the first day, almost to the point of insistence, to open it with a rusty needle. Panitaka was far from pleased when I demurred, but Tetama forgave me, as being the victim of ignorance, and pressed her nose to mine affectionately by way of expressing sympathy for my affliction.

By this second night, however, I was suffering grievously. Shattered with chills, I rolled in a blanket from the ship and waited for the night to end. Tioma, with the kindness that characterized all of Paunu's family, observing my distress, drew my head upon her shoulder.

"Rest your head here. Do not break your neck upon the wooden pillow."

Tefakarava, at my right, nestled close to warm away the chill.

An elder woman hushed the chatter: "Keep quiet; the white men want to sleep."

She was heeded for a time, and I drifted into an uneasy slumber that deepened with the warmth of the blanket and the kindly care of my charming hostesses. The old lady's words, however, gave rise to a "witty" saying that was repeated many times during the remainder of our stay in the islands. It was chubby, long-lashed, demure-looking Tefakarava who took it up, she with that marvelous name: That Which Causes to Shine. Again and again we were to hear her say, softly, those libelous words: "Keep quiet, white men, the natives want to sleep."

My hand was badly swollen the next day, and I almost had to use force to prevent Panitaka, Tetama and others from operating on it. I put them off with the plea that Keneti was a great surgeon who would perform wonders of white men's magic upon it when I returned to Tepuka.

Good old Tehau received me cordially when we called on him to receive coconuts for the day and to confirm news of the recovery of his son, whose illness had called Tehau and Teroro-tu to Tepoto. Had I known earlier the relation - adoptive though it was - that he was to bear, I would have cultivated him more thoroughly from the first, for he proved, as did Teroro-tu, among the most intelligent and charming of our neighbors. There is, one may say, a greater merit in affection for an adopted child than for a natural one: the children of one's flesh are a gift of the seasons and the gods, whereas the

children of the spirit are taken from deliberate choice. Paunu, too, was like a father: I loved him when I first set eyes on that square-hewn mighty man, one of the wisest and kindliest men I have known. I am persuaded that Paunu had, if he chose to exercise it, great spiritual power; in an other age he would have been, I doubt not, a mighty chief.

The wind had been adverse, the sky unsettled, for two days; Bob again postponed our departure until afternoon. Wretched as I was, I walked out to see a little more of the island, for it was a joyful place, green and lovely with sun or rain slanting through its luxuriant fronds. Returning, I found Pahoa and his brother skinning a large cat which, they explained, had been killed by a dog.

"What are you going to do with it? Stuff it?"

"No, we're going to cook and eat it."

As they explained further, they would not have thought of killing the cat for food, but since the animal was already dead, it would be a shame to waste it. There spoke again the thrifty nature of the Tuamotuan. I thought of the care with which Kararo hoarded our discarded tins; Tauhoa's salvage of the luncheon scraps for the children, the gathering of every bit of unused coconut meat or table leavings for pigs and fowl. In a land where one lives mainly by what one can wrest from a not always kindly sea, one learns not to throw any food away.

Tehau and Teroro-tu waded out in the shallows on the reef to bid me an affectionate farewell. Though I scarcely realized it then, it was to be my last sight of them, for they were remaining on Tepoto to bring over the canoe in which they had come. Paunu and several members of his family, however - including the gentle Tioma and Tefakarava - accompanied us, with twenty or thirty others, all crowded to gether on the forty-foot cutter.

It was a dismal all-day passage, wind and current against us, tossing the *Tiare Tahiti* till she shipped great slashes of green water over her reeling deck. Rain fell intermittently out of a putty-colored sky. Removing my wet shirt, I stowed it in one of the bunks below and returned on deck, where the rain trickled down my bare skin as it did down that of Paunu, the drops sparkling in his slightly grizzled small stiff curls. Tauhoa, wrapped unavailingly in Bob's raincoat, gave up and lay in the slosh of water on the deck. Tioma, kneeling aft, laid her head in her father's lap and moaned. Tefakarava's round olive face grew greener and greener as the Tia-re, bucking and heeling over, tacked this way and that, beating slowly to windward, in the cold slow rain. I found myself considering that it might have been more comfortable, if also more hazardous, in Tehau's canoe.

Evening was near when we arrived at the "harbor" of Rangihoa, where a crowd had gathered to meet us. It was a long evening, too, in Maké's house.

Hiti, temporary husband of Make, was insistent that I repeat the impromptu dance I had created at that earlier gathering in Maukiri's house. In my feverish and weakened condition, I was in no mood to do so, even had I

been able to recall any of the improvised steps. I refused none too graciously, to my later regret, for it seems to me now that it would have been but little to do for these friends who had been so kind and in whose lives there was so little of distraction or entertainment.

I fell into a troubled sleep, to dream of Hiti as a black giant trampling upon my wounded hand.

34. I Walk Too Near a Grave

THE OLD MEN SAID it was because I had walked too near a grave. They went so far as to intimate that in doing so I had approached uncomfortably near my own - but that is violating chronological sequence.

That sequence, let us say, carries back to an early-May morning in Papeete, and to Schenck, warning me against the Dangerous Islands - or, for that matter, all islands.

Schenck knew considerable about islands. He had lived, as I had, in Hawaii, before he settled in Tahiti. He had been shipwrecked from a canoe in a flooded river in Fiji; he had been paddled many miles down that river, shaking so severely with fever that he scarcely knew whether the boat was rocking; he showed terrifying scars that were his souvenirs of coral cuts and infected scratches. He told uncomfortable tales of poisoned wounds that refused to heal for months, and of the ministrations of unskillful surgeons who cut in the wrong place and aggravated the trouble.

"There is the nohu fish," he said. "It buries itself in the sand and sticks up a spine, like a periscope. Step on it, as you are likely enough to do, for you can't see it, and in a few minutes your whole leg turns black; if you have a chromium steel constitution and a lot of luck, you live.

"No tropical country was made for the white man. There is leprosy; there is syphilis; there is elephantiasis. True enough, they didn't have leprosy or syphilis until the whites and the Chinese brought it to them; but both diseases are worse in these countries. There are native infections for which we have no names. You will go among people covered with open sores; the flies will swarm from them and settle on you or on your food.

"Have you ever tried landing on the reef of a low island? There are no harbors. You land in a whaleboat. The boatmen aim it at a shallow groove in the reef. They wait for a wave and ride in on it. It's a fifty-fifty break. If the conditions at the moment are just right and the boatmen's judgment is good, you land safely with no more than a wetting. If not, the boat turns over and pins you against the coral. In that case, the survivors give you as fine a funeral as they can manage. Or, if you happen to be thrown clear, you are a mass of coral cuts, almost sure to become infected, and you wish you'd been killed quickly in the first place."

I felt weaker and weaker as he went on. Sitting down on the curbstone in front of Sam Russell's office, I mopped cold perspiration from my face. What had I let myself in for?

And now, nearly three months later, I had seen several of the Dangerous

Islands, and had encountered little of those things. To be sure, the boat had upset in landing at Meetia and I had been rolled on the black and jagged rocks of that inhospitable shore, but the cuts had healed within a week. Again, Tupu had miscalculated the speed of his canoe in boarding a schooner off Rangihoa, and had capsized it, hurling me into the sea, with the result that as I came up, the overturning outrigger had bumped me smartly on the nose; but the sharks didn't get me, and the nose wasn't broken. There had been plenty of flies, and a few mosquitoes, but I had seen nothing worse in the way of disease among the people of Tepuka and Tepoto than a kind of boil, an inconvenient but not dangerous skin eruption, and *tangé*, which speckles the skin with round white spots somewhat as does psoriasis, but apparently does no further damage. It was just as well that the authorities hadn't let us land at leprosy rotten Reao, where Schenck's dismal predictions were some what justified. We were just as well pleased to escape Reao; it is, though interesting, an unattractive place.

I had begun to think that the Dangerous Islands - with the exception of Reao - were a more healthful environment than many more civilized places.

And then, it seems, I walked too near a grave!

It started with that tiny eruption, like a heat blister, on the back of the little finger of my left hand. We never could trace the source of it to any known injury. Perhaps a sliver from a mat; one of the small thorns that arm the edges of pandanus leaves; these are but random guesses. Perhaps some decaying sea growth in the partly enclosed warm water of the lagoon, where we swam, generated a poison. Now my whole body was afire with it.

On my return from Tepoto, Keneti and I opened the infected area with a sterilized pair of scissors and treated it with such medicines as we had. Next day the entire hand was swollen as far as the wrist, and the finger itself was larger than a thumb.

Keneti was plainly worried.

"We're not getting anywhere with this. If the *Vaite* were here I'd send you back to Papeete aboard her. I'd be afraid to risk you on the *Tiare Tahiti*; we couldn't treat the wound properly, and it would be hard to keep sea water out of it. All the natives say sea water is bad for these things."

But the *Vaite* was far away. There was no available contact with civilization; no communication. Even had there been a ship available, I might have reached hospitals and physicians too late. We must depend on our own meager resources, and those of the natives.

The natives! There was a thought.

We're just groping around in the dark, trying to treat this infection with civilized remedies," Keneti concluded. "Our treatment not only isn't curing it; it seems to be making it worse.

It's a native infection. The natives undoubtedly know a lot more about it than we do, and if it were my own hand, I'd have them treat it with their own medicines. They've had hundreds of years of experience with the few native diseases there are. Likely enough this kind of infection isn't known to

civilized doctors at all."

"What do you do for this illness?" I asked Tauria, who was in the house at the time.

"A tobacco poultice," was his suggestion.

I had chewed tobacco just once. My mind flashed back from that coral island to the grassy violet-starred bank of a little river in Wisconsin; my father nodding in an afternoon nap over his fishing-pole; the sample plug of Battle-Ax that had been tossed on the doorstep, brought furtively from my pocket. I hadn't repeated that experiment. However, if I didn't chew now, Tauria would, for he was eager to try the remedy. So I reduced to pulp a sufficient quantity of the acrid Tahitian "twist" and bound it upon the injury.

The tobacco didn't make it worse, but it didn't improve it, either.

Tauria is only a young man," Keneti reflected. "If I were you, I would consult Paunu. He is a tahunga; he probably knows just what to do in cases like this."

Paunu displayed professional interest.

"It is an *uruaitu*," he diagnosed, using a word long vanished from the language of daily speech, "a ghost-head."

"A ghost-head," he repeated. "Who has had cause to work sorcery upon you?"

"As far as I know, I have done nobody any wrong."

Temata has cast a spell on you," suggested Roki, who did not like the daughter of Maru. I recalled the grievance that young woman cherished against me, proceeding from that fateful joke of weeks ago.

It was unfortunate that my blunder had been directed toward Temata, who was of a peculiarly sensitive and proud disposition. Others of my friends might have overlooked or forgiven such a slight, having compassion for my ignorance. But Temata had already a rather difficult time of it at Tepuka. Of alien birth though of Tepuka ancestry, with a smattering of foreign ways derived from residence at Fakahina and in Tahiti, and deficient thereby in the fundamental art of a Tepuka woman: the making of hats and mats - she had developed a deep-seated inferiority complex and a correspondingly active defense mechanism which caused her to be stigmatized by the native sons and daughters of her ancestral island as "*teoteo*," which might be translated "uppity" or "big-feeling."

Paunu turned to Temae, grandfather or great-uncle of the suspect: "Has Temata worked witchcraft against Pari?"

"Nonsense!" scoffed Temae. "Temata does not know witchcraft."

"What then could be the cause?" I queried.

"You must have committed some sacrilege without knowing of it, and a spirit has entered your finger. Perhaps you have walked too near a grave."

"Perhaps so," I agreed. I did not tell them of the time when, having heard that the spirits of the ancestors arise on moonlight nights and walk along the road that passes the tiny cemetery, I had gone there and sat on the stone wall

of the House of the Dead for the time it takes to smoke a pandanus-leaf cigarette, and no spirit had appeared.

"Will you invoke the spirits for me?" I asked Paunu.

"I will do so if it becomes clearly necessary," he promised. "But first let us see what can be done with medicines. My daughters will go to the forest and pluck herbs. We may be able to cure this illness by natural means."

Roki and Tauhoa talked of island medicine as they gathered the young leaf buds of the karauri and the flower buds of the piupiu and crushed these things upon a stone. Roki chewed a bit of the green leaf of a young coconut tree, spat it upon the mixture, and bound the poultice upon the finger with a strip of cloth torn from a clean pareu, relating meanwhile their previous cures.

"The first time Pini the son of Maono went to Fakahina, he came home very ill. He could not eat. We made medicine and in one day he was well."

It appeared, however, that the medical skill of Paunu's daughters was not equal to my case. Next day the pain and swelling had reached the shoulder; the arm was paralyzed and I shivered with fever. Keneti was visibly alarmed.

"Paunu," I insisted, "you will have to make magic."

Now Paunu, although a sorcerer of sorts, is also a prominent member of the church of the Sacred Heart, and he was clearly reluctant to traffic with the ancestral spirits by means of the ancient magic, except as a last resort. These things, he would have explained if I had persisted, were things of Satan. Still, if it became necessary to fight demon with demon, he assured me he would do so.

"Go first," he counseled, "to Toriu. He and his wife Tinaia, daughter of Temae, know the *rakau nati*. You have seen this medicine used. Did not Noere the Younger break his leg when he fell over a canoe? The leg was treated with that medicine, and now Noere walks about and plays marbles with the other boys in the street. Go to Toriu and Tinaia, and try that medicine. If it fails, I will invoke the gods."

Toriu and Tinaia gravely inspected the infection.

"There can be no doubt," they agreed, "that the *rakau nati* is needed. We will come tonight and treat your illness."

Just after dark they came, Toriu bearing a half coconut shell filled with a reddish, thick liquid, shot with pale gleams of gold.

"The root and bark of the karauri and of the horahora," Toriu explained, when asked, but there may have been other and secret ingredients, for the concoction had a strange, muddy consistency and a thick, earthy smell. The horahora, however, is a plant of known virtues: in Hawaii, where it is called noni, it is used even in this day of modern surgery to reduce fractures and sprains.

Tinaia washed the whole hand carefully, and applied the red medicine with a white feather. Red and white are colors pleasing to the gods; to use a black feather would have been gross malpractice, by island standards.

Torin cut the ends off a bud coconut, a little larger than those the children

use for juggling, and placed the truncated nut under my arm to block the circulation and check the spread of the infection.

"Hold it there all night," he ordered. "It will keep the evil spirit from climbing farther up your body."

They remained long in the house that night, turning over the pages of back-number magazines, and marveling at pictures of strange things in the white men's country. Among those pictures were scenes of hospital operating-rooms, in a play then popular in America, where white-robed surgeons wearing inhuman-looking masks wielded sterilized instruments over sufferers like myself.

White medicine men," I explained. "The masks are to keep away the evil spirits that cause illness, which in the white men's language are called 'bacteria.' "

Toriu understood. He understood the white robes, too, from his viewpoint, and approved. He and the white medicine men had a good deal in common; though they would give different reasons for it.

The pain dulled; whether from the effect of Toriu's medicine, which was cool and soothing with a curious drawing sensation, or merely from nerve fatigue, I do not know. I must have been still somewhat feverish, perhaps delirious. I lay quietly on the mat and closed my eyes.

"Will he recover?" asked Keneti.

"It is hard to say," Toriu replied cautiously. "A native can recover from the ghost-head; a white man - we do not know. We have never before treated a white man. They are not accustomed to our diseases, as we are not accustomed to theirs. We die of colds, which to the white men are a slight thing. They sneeze and cough, as do we, but they wipe their noses with handkerchiefs and go about their work. As for us, our lungs fill and we die."

"If you had come to us sooner," said Tinaia, "it would have been better. The evil spirit had already reached the armpit before we began treatment. It is under the left shoulder; it is near the heart. If the evil spirit reaches the heart, there is no hope."

Paunu, who had been listening, got up, with a strange expression on his face, and went out into the haunted night. In the languor that crept over me as the pain subsided, I lay listening to their talk with an odd detachment, as if they were speaking of someone else. Looking back upon it now, it seems strange that I was not terrified. We were utterly isolated. It had taken the *Tiare Tahiti* three weeks to reach us, and it might take as long to get back to any port where there were physicians of our own race. The natives said it would be fatal to travel, in my condition. There was no way; of calling help. Only the herbs and incantations of these islanders, and what sturdiness of constitution I might have, stood between me and a miserable death. Yet, strangely, I felt no fear, but only a mild curiosity and a sense of peace. It was good, I reflected dreamily, to lie on these cool mats, with these kind people watching over me.

By one of those curious twists of psychology which magnify trivial

occasions in memory, the date July 24th has stood out in my mind since on the night of that date a boy of ten years or so, in his bed in a Wisconsin village, reflected sadly that the summer vacation was half gone and he hadn't done many of the things he wanted to do. That boy, playing at "savage" in backyards and pastures and woodlots, would have derived a curious compensation if he could have looked ahead and seen himself on July 24th of a much later year in his house of leaves on a coral island, even though disabled and in pain. Part of the celebrated "lure" of far and primitive places no doubt is a response to the boy in man; in such surroundings, among childlike peoples, he regains the play world of his childhood. Where the pursuits at which he played as a boy are the serious vocations of adults, he finds a satisfaction of some instinct as old as the childhood of his own race.

However this may be, on that day, the second of Toriu and Tinaia's treatment, the infected hand felt slightly better, and the general symptoms less pronounced. Old Temae, who had seen many such cases in his long life, predicted that it would be far advanced toward recovery in a few more days.

"This illness is well known," he explained. "It occurs oftener on the sole of the foot, but it may attack any part of the body. On the foot, it often develops from a stone bruise.

Day by day Toriu and Tinaia came and washed the hand, and painted each day a smaller area with the medicine, which left a stain like dried blood.

"We are forcing the evil spirit down into the spot where it entered," Toriu explained.

Whatever the merits of that theory, the results justified the practice. Soreness and swelling receded as the treatment continued. By the third day, the infection had been localized. It rose - true to its name - from the base of the finger in the semblance of a ghostly skull, a high hard dome of pain.

"It is time for the poultice," declared Toriu with some satisfaction. He prepared it as Roki and Tauhoa had done, from the same herbs, and bound it with a strip of red cloth.

"Do not burn the dressings, or throw them away carelessly," Tinaia warned. "Put them in this coconut shell, and I will dispose of them fittingly. It is not well to anger the gods further."

She meant that she would bury them in the ground or throw them into the sea; the practice differs in different countries and with individual medicine-makers.

The poultice was cool and soothing.

"On Monday, in the middle of the day, the swelling will break," Tinaia predicted. "Keep it covered until then, and don't let anyone see it."

Visitors came and squatted beside me, and caressed the other hand: Maukiri and her daughters, urging me to come to their home to stay, that they might comfort me; Temae, who himself knows sorcery; Ngohe, mumbling words of sympathy; Tukua the chief's daughter; Roki and Tioma, fragrant with scented coconut oil; Tauhoa, always practical and helpful, rolling up a

bundle of my clothes to wash. Teuri, a frightened expression on his long, serious face, crossed himself with pious precaution before passing the doorway of this house into which "Satan" seemed to have entered.

The child Riua sat at my feet, in silent sympathy. Teuringa-iti came with her sweetheart Maono the son of Maono, bringing a great basket of drinking-nuts. Paniroro, who had returned on the Tiare with us from Tepoto, talked of the lands she had visited. Paniroro was a traveled woman; she had been to Fakahina, that port which draws so many of the young people from the two islands, and to farther Fakarava, capital of the Tuamotu.

"This," as she pointed out to Tinaia an advertisement in one of our magazines, "is a coloring for the lips, and this for the cheeks. I have seen a white woman, the wife of the administrator, use them so" - indicating in pantomime the application of rouge and lipstick. "The white women's faces are pale, and they paint their lips and faces, for they have not the natural color of the human skin, as we have."

She had a child with her - a pretty little curly-haired girl - who, she said, was half American, a quarter Chinese and a quarter Tuamotuan; and showed us pictures of the child's parents, whom Bob recognized as friends of his in one of the more westerly islands.

"It was Tiki, the first man, who brought illness and death into the world," said Paunu, who followed my progress closely. "Tiki made Ahuone, the first woman, out of a heap of sand, and their daughter was Hina. When Hina was grown, she was very beautiful, and Tiki made her his second wife. But Ahuone found it out, and Hina was ashamed and fled to the moon. Then Tiki, in his grief, gave himself death, and since his time all men must die."

"But, Paunu, was there no way of undoing the curse of death?"

"Alas! there was none. Maui tried to win back eternal life for man. He wrestled with Tiki at the bottom of the sea, and tried to take out his own internal organs and exchange them for those of Tiki. If he could do that, he thought, he could conquer death, for Tiki's organs were still immortal; Tiki had created death only by an act of will. But Maui's brothers followed him and interrupted him with ill-timed questions, so that he failed.

"So mankind was still troubled with decay and death. But Tama saved man many troubles."

"Who was Tama?"

"He was the son of Tané, lord of the sky. Our ancestors prayed to him to cure wounds, to heal the bites of eels and sharks, and bruises from falling out of trees. He was called the God Who Makes to Live.

"You understand, of course, that all these things are but heathen tales, and things of Satan."

"Yes," I replied, "but it seems to me rather significant that this Tuamotuan savior was called Tama, which means the Son, and that he was the son of Tané, the creator of all things good and beautiful... and that the name of Tané means Man. For the Christian scriptures, as you know, speak of the Savior as

the Son of Man, who is the Light, the Way and the Life."

"It may be so. It is a deep study. But it is true that our ancestors believed Tama healed the sick. When people are very ill, as you have been, their spirits sometimes leave their bodies and wander into the Great Darkness. It was Tama, our fathers believed, who led such spirits back into the bodies, and the sick people then recovered."

"Did they always recover?"

"Sometimes the spirit refused to go back into the body. Then the body died, but the spirit lived, and Tama led it to the spirit-world. If the spirit ate the fruit offered by demons in the Darkness, Tama was powerless to save. The demons, in great boats, chased such souls and threw them into a frightful place; the same, no doubt, as the hell of which the priests have told us."

"If the spirits of the dead are teachers, as I have heard, why then do the people fear them?"

"They do not fear that kind of spirit. But a man has more than one spirit within him. One spirit remains in the body when it is buried, and that is the one that is feared. Such spirits come out of the graves at night, hold parties, and even go fishing. It is very dangerous to meet them."

There was more of this. And day by day the visitors came.

The elders sat on the floor and chanted. My adopted grand mother Teuringa was the liveliest of the lot, grunting and moving her stiff limbs in an ancient dance as if recalling long past amorous encounters of her youth. Tinaia, holding her pet pig in her lap, joined in the rousing chants.

So the days passed, in a hut woven of palm leaves and thatched with the leaves of the pandanus, floored with pebbles; under treatment by a mixture of herb doctor and pagan magician, a thousand miles from a hospital, but surrounded by kind and loving friends, who sorrowed at my discomfort and grieved for my imminent departure.

Practically the whole village called. Only Temata the daughter of Maru did not come near.

"It is proof," charged Roki, "that she has caused this illness by witchcraft."

"Tell her," I suggested, "that I myself am a sorcerer and that I will make Hawaiian magic, which is stronger than the magic of Tepuka, to bring trouble upon her worse than mine."

Tukua, Temata's cousin, who was sitting in the doorway, appeared startled.

Temata has made no magic," she protested. "Temata doesn't know witchcraft."

That evening Tukua returned, bringing Temata, who seemed ill at ease. Other visitors watched her narrowly as she entered and squatted near my mat. Temata looked around at them defiantly, then turned to me, saying defiantly: "It serves you right!"

Monday came, and my nurse Tinaia remarked with satisfaction the fulfillment of her prediction. The infected spot, when she unwrapped it,

resembled nothing so much as a miniature volcano in eruption. The next treatment, she indicated, was a poultice of soap - red soap, by which she meant the harsh yellow laundry soap that comes in long bars in the schooners from Tahiti. Keneti exhibited a cake of a widely advertised American brand which is much redder, with a strong antiseptic odor. Tinaia was visibly pleased.

"It smells of the spirit-world," she commented with delight, as she observed its redness and sniffed its medicinal aroma. Surely the gods would now be favorable. She shaved off thin flakes of it and laid them gently on the infected area.

By this time I was feeling much better and had begun to stir around the house and even to walk out into the street. Temata passed, on her way to the well. I had been waiting for this occasion to try a little experiment.

Pouring a few drops of alcohol on a ball of cotton, I touched a match to it and stood in the doorway, tossing the burning cotton up and down on the palm of my well hand, and chanting what I could remember of a Hawaiian prayer which in ancient times was chanted, with proper accompanying ceremonies, to bring retribution upon one guilty of black sorcery.

> "The fire burns,
> fire of the dense darkness . . .
> Fire is in the heavens,
> decay, maggots, corruption,
> death is in the heavens!
> O Kane, o Lono, o Ku,
> breathe death upon the sorcerer
> and upon him who procured the token of death ·..."

The divergent dialects of the Polynesian language have enough words in common to enable a Tuamotuan to grasp something of the import of such an invocation. Temata was alarmed. She ran toward me, scooping up sand, as she ran, to throw upon the flame.

I chanted on, waving the burning cotton out of reach. Hurling another handful of sand, she walked away, more uneasy, I knew, than she was willing to admit. The sorcery of Hawaii is famous throughout the Polynesian countries.

"Will she die today?" asked Roki, in awe.

"She will not die," I reassured her. "I have not made the spell complete. I only wanted to frighten her, because in my illness she mocked me. If I had taken a lock of her haw and burned it with the magic fire that does not burn my hand, then she might indeed die."

"She deserves to," said Roki severely. "She is a woman without kindness."

Next day Toriu bent a long yellow-white fiber of coconut husk into a noose and twisted it gently but firmly deep down in the infected place; then, with a sudden sharp movement, drew it out, removing the "core" of the infection.

"In three days you will be well," he promised.

He continued to apply the soap dressing for a day or two; then announced that it was time for the final medicine. This was a fine charcoal, made by burning coconut shells in a fire of husks. He dusted this dry dressing carefully into and over the wound.

"Let this powder remain. Don't bandage the finger with a cloth."

The following day he came for the final treatment. His little son played on the floor with his pet pig as Toriu dressed the wound.

"A fine boy," I said, making conversation. "What is his name?"

"His name is Rino. I have a daughter, too," he added, "a grown-up daughter, fourteen years old."

"I have met your daughter Temaru. She is very beautiful."

I refrained from adding that she also had many lice.

"Do you want her?" inquired Toriu hospitably. "If so, I will send her to you tonight."

"You are indeed kind," I answered. "But I am still weak from my illness, and the boat cannot be held any longer. Now that I am well, we must sail at once."

A week later, at Vahitahi, two natives led me to a small house at the farther side of the village.

"This is the house of Hinao. He is very ill."

There lay Schenck who had warned me three months before - now propped up in a vast bed, against a pile of pillows, his emaciated features, uncut hair and drooping mustache suggesting a ghost come back from the Great Darkness. Be side him lay a cane, with which it was his custom, when needing attention at night, to batter on the sheet of corrugated iron that closed in one side of his house, to summon the other white visitor on the island, Ua, to his aid.

"Have you any quinine?" he inquired. "There's none on the island. I'm having a recurrence of that fever I caught in Fiji."

Quinine was brought from the cutter. Hinao, as they called Schenck there, had lost twenty-six pounds and had been unable to retain solid food for two weeks, but in three days more he was able to ride in me handcart which is used to transport copra to the landing and corpses to me cemetery. We put him aboard the copra schooner for Papeete, in care of the bishop of French Oceania, who was returning there from Mangareva.

"Never eat fish cooked," me bishop was saying as the sailors dragged the whaleboat off the reef.

His Grace had been a resident priest at our own island of Tepuka Maruia, and had been so long in the service that he had acquired a native palate.

"Never cook fish. Never put salt on it, or lime juice or lemon juice. Eat it fresh from the sea, as the good God made it. Only then can you appreciate the subtle distinctions between the flavors of the various fishes that He, in His

wisdom, has provided."

"That may be all right for the bishop," said Hinao, in English, which the bishop does not understand. "But what I want right now is a good T-bone steak."

A month later, in Papeete, Maru á Maru, brother of Temata, led me to his house in the little lane that runs back inland behind the Chinese coffee-shop opposite the shipyard at Fareute.

"This is Tetua, my wife. She is ill. Her hand is very sore."

I looked at Tetua's hand. The little finger of the left hand was swollen and inflamed, rising in the ghost-skull shape I knew so well.

"*E uruaitu!*" I exclaimed.

"Ah, you know the *uruaitu*?"

"I have suffered from it, and have been cured by the medicine of the land."

But I did not tell them that I had invoked a Hawaiian spell against Temata in far-away Tepuka.

When the *Islander*, a month late, chugged into port, one of the first to greet me was Ernest, the cook, exhibiting a bandaged hand. I examined the injury. Again the skull of the ghost-was there no end to this *uruaitu* business?

"You'd better have that attended to," we all advised him.

Ernest went to the hospital and came back minus the bone from the last joint of that finger. Perhaps he had been at sea with it too long. It is probable, too, that the white medicine men do not know the *rakau nati*. It is certain that they do not know Tuamotuan magic.

And so ended that particular venture with Death in the Dangerous Islands. Hinao thinks it was the native medicine that saved me. But I saw the gleam in Paunu's eyes the night that Tinaia said, "If the evil spirit reaches the heart .... " And I am sure that Paunu, at the risk of his Christian soul, performed the anciently prescribed incantations for my recovery. No doubt he interceded with Tama, the Polynesian Son of Man, the God Who Makes to Live. And I like to think that even now, nights when the moon hangs low and melon colored over the sea toward Tepoto, Paunu the tahunga, looking out of his thatched doorway, intones the chant that is chanted for an absent friend.

35. The Islands Know Many Farewells

IT WAS our last day at Tepuka Maruia.

"You may go now," said Tinaia. "The charcoal will protect the wound from salt water until it closes."

She and her husband had saved me much suffering and probably my life. How should this service be rewarded? It was given freely, out of friendship and hospitality, but here, too, applied the Polynesian principle of free exchange of gifts.

An empty cigarette tin and a bottle of perfume seemed an inadequate fee, though Tinaia received them with gratitude. When I added thirty francs and told Toriu to buy the material for a new dress for Tinaia the next time the *Vaite* came into port, they were as pleased as a surgeon of our own country with five hundred dollars.

Kararo loitered about the house as Keneti and I packed up to leave, in quest of tins and anything else he could acquire, not only by gift but by purchase, for Kararo, by island standards, was a wealthy man, and there was little on the island to buy.

"For how much will you sell me your good garment?" pointing to my stout jacket, "and your black trousers?" indicating my blue dungarees.

"I need them myself. Besides, they won't fit you, Kararo."

He tried them on, and agreed sadly that this was so. Article after article he "bid" for, but there was almost nothing I could let him have.

I didn't want to disappoint even Kararo. I wished I'd had a trunkful of things to sell him, for his acquisitive nature craved to buy. Finally his glance fell upon my diving glasses, which I was about to throw away, the connecting link that held them together having been broken while in the possession of Temata, who had thereupon returned them to me, saying they were "no good."

"How much?" Kararo demanded.

I quoted a price of about seventy-five cents.

Kararo snapped them up without waiting to bargain. It was all they had been worth when new, but they were worth more than that, even as they were, to Kararo, who could tinker them into shape and use them for years of fishing.

Maono-iti, Tauria and others carried our remaining goods to the reef, and the sailors ferried it aboard, not without losing some of it. Through the clear water, the shining top of a coffee tin gleamed from the far bottom - to be retrieved, perhaps, after our departure, for its value as a container, by some of the powerful divers of the island.

"I'm going with you," announced Tupu. "Ropati has hired me to dive for

the anchor."

In these coral seas, an anchor often becomes wedged in the living rocks so firmly that it cannot be drawn up. In that case, a diver is sent down to observe and report on its position and the ship is then maneuvered so as to make it possible to dislodge it. Or sometimes the diver goes down and works on it direct. The Tuamotuans are famous divers, and Tupu, who could stay down an incredibly long time and was never seasick, had been chosen for this work aboard the *Tiare*.

In the mid-afternoon, supper was being prepared on the coral between the houses of Paunu and of Tuata. Squatting on a coconut, around the smoking fire, I relished for the last time the tender raw fish, with bits of papaya and ripe coconut. Tauhoa brought a drinking-nut. Roki, a slab of fish in one hand and a piece of ripe coconut in the other, sat beside me. It was as much as I could have wished, to have my last meal in Tepuka under the trees with our friends about me and the smoke of burning coconut husks in my nostrils.

In the late afternoon we sat seaward on the sand. Paunu's daughters and Tefakarava sang a sad little song of farewell:

> "The southeast wind now Jeans upon the land;
> the east wind blows and you are lost to me:
> your body swallowed in the night-dark sea.
> We shall not see each other any more:
> so swift your sailing!
> Your body is pierced with cold-
> and I remain on the shore, the place of love!"

We danced in the moonlight on the pebbled ground as we had done in our first evenings on the island. Tiring soon, for I was still weak from my illness, I fell asleep with my head in Tefakarava's hospitable lap. When the crowd dispersed, Keneti and I remained guests of Paunu's family, for the house in which we had been living, dismantled of our belongings, had been returned to its owner.

The four girls disappeared in the direction of the bathing enclosure, and came back wearing pareu tucked around the waist and folded short as worn by boys. So clad, they danced in the moonlight - a lovely sight, the tawny bodies above the barbaric flowered cloth, their oiled hair catching red gleams under the moon, their red-swathed hips weaving in the island dance.

Tiring at last, the members of the family laid themselves in a row upon the mats, as did we. I awoke in the night when rain pattered in upon my face through the open doorway, and saw Tauhoa running out to rescue the clothes she had washed in the afternoon and laid on the coral to dry. The squall passed; I went outside and looked my last at a Tepuka night. The moon was still bright, lighting up the wide expanse of beach, and inking dark shadows where the dwellings were and beneath the palms. A morning star glowed greenly against the pale gold light.

Waking again at early day, I discovered that the pillow which in the darkness I had taken for a wooden plank was In reality a broad flat slab of coral stone.

There was no breakfast at Paunu's house, for it was Sunday. As I have remarked, there is little breakfast any morning of the week, for the day's food serves for the day, and there is seldom much left over with which to start the next day; and since under the Christian dispensation there is no fishing on Sunday, that day more resembles a fast than a feast occasion.

"You must not sail," said Paunu, that pagan sorcerer and pillar of the white priests' church, "until after the prayer service. It is well to pay one's respects to God before going on a voyage."

Keneti accompanied our hosts to the Sacred Heart; I was excused on the ground that it was not seemly to appear in a house of worship clad in shorts, my other clothes having gone aboard the ship. I lay on the mat in Paunu's house, looking up at the neatly woven roof and reflecting with a tinge of sadness that I should never see that house again.

The service ended, Keneti and I solemnly took leave of the two hundred villagers, who were ranged in rows on the curb stones near the church. We passed down the line, clasping the hand of each in turn. Here were the men and women who had been our friends and neighbors, our guides and instructors, in those months of island life. It came to me with a sudden pang that I was pressing for the last time those brown hands that had been held out to us full of kindness.

"It is a great pity," they mourned, "that you are going away."

They would miss us, this speech conveyed; but it meant also that they were sorry for us that we must leave Tepuka. The Tepukans have a good deal of civic pride.

The keen narrow eyes of Temata á Maru looked at me doubtfully out of her sullen brown face. In the preparations for departure I had forgotten her. I recalled, with dismay, the power of suggestion, which has caused many a Polynesian to fall ill and die of no good reason save that he has been told someone is practicing sorcery against him. I must not leave with anything like that on my conscience.

"Temata," I reassured her, "I have undone the spell that I wove. No harm will come to you through me. Go free - and may life be to you in the gods!"

When the general leave-taking ceremony was completed, we sat on the sand a while with Paunu's people and a few relatives and friends. The young women sang again the sad little farewell song.

The children of whom we had become fond clustered around the fringes of the gathering. Little Atera crept up and pressed my sound hand. Riua shyly offered me a tin can filled with small round brown nuts.

"The seeds of the *karauri*," she said. "Plant them in your own country. The fragrance will remind you of Tepuka Maruia."

One must go, sometime. We walked, hand in hand with our friends, over

the sand and the tilted gray slabs of ancient beach, to the water's edge. The gracious sunlight of the coral seas lay about us, warming me shallow pools that lay in the crevices of the reef. Temae's short grizzled beard rasped us gently as he kissed us on both cheeks. The oldest man on the island; even should we return a few years hence, he was thinking, he would not be there. Maono-iti, the chief's son, took leave of us in the ancient manner; Tauria, our adopted brother, kissed us for himself, and for Tehau and Teroro-tu who were still absent on Tepoto. Paunu laid his stubbled cheek to ours.

"Go," said Paunu. "I have prayed for your safe voyage."

To what gods he had prayed, he did not state.

We could see Paunu's people waving to us for a long time from the sand before their house, as the cutter gathered head way in the bright late morning. The last human thing we could distinguish was Roki - a tall, lonely figure, waving something bright - a pareu, no doubt .... The *Tiare Tahiti* sped around a corner of the land; I recognized the foot of the street at Tupiti, where we had spent so many pleasant, reflective morning hours. A squall drove us below, and when we returned on deck the island that had been our home was out of sight behind the shimmering curve of sea.

And so we left Tepuka Maruia, for new lands under the horizon. Those last days on that ring of coral were full of pain, but made radiant by the kindness and hospitality of our friends. Ah, Tepuka! I shall remember you golden with sun light and silver with the moon; I shall remember the sanded streets etched in bold patterns with the shadows of your palms; and your red reef glistening in the dawn of many mornings. The taste of cool drinking-nuts will be in my mouth and the smell of your fires of coconut husk in my nostrils, and the coconut oil on the glossy hair of your daughters as they dance barefooted on the pebbled sand.

IV

New Lands Under the Horizon

36. "Aita Fanau"

THE CUTTER BOWLED, tilting, over a tumbled sea. All day we lay on the cabin roof, watching the waves go by and singing the plaintive chants of the island we had left.

"We're ten miles from Fangatau but on the wrong side of it," reported Bob, taking sights. "We'll have to tack back and heave to in the night."

As the ship's clock struck four bells, I unrolled myself from my mat in the bunk below and went out on deck to glimpse, in the cloudy moonlight, the low dark line of Fangatau.

The island, as the light grew, appeared, from the sea, much like the one whence we had just come, though without the prominent landmark of its coral church. Teana, the main village, is inland, on the inner rim or lagoon side of the atoll. But here was the same curving shore, the same reddish reef and tilted blocks of solidified rubble, the broad sand and the green and tawny forest beyond. A road ran down between the palms to a rude stone jetty, scarcely distinguishable from the reef around it. A few fishermen with tall spears were the only sign of life.

"Plenty boat been b-r-r-o-oke to pieces on that reef," observed Matini, the navigator.

A canoe, stabilized by a rude outrigger, came alongside, and its occupant, a fine, jolly Tuamotuan with a face like that of an American Indian, came aboard. He kissed Keneti on both cheeks, and pressed my hand warmly, with an irresistible smile. This was Fariua, former chief of Fangatau and one of the most learned men, in respect to the ancient wisdom, in all the Tuamotu. As we landed in his canoe, we were greeted by his wife Reva, a tall woman in black, bearing lingering traces of a beauty that must have been, in her youth, a sight to take away one's breath.

Fariua loaded our luggage into a wheelbarrow - a sign already of the superior "civilization" of Fangatau, for in the land that had been our home the past three months, no wheel had ever turned - and trundled down a smooth road, elevated a few feet above the surrounding country, between very tall coconut trees whose loosened ripe nuts now and then spun downward in the brisk wind.

The village, even with the arrival of a ship to arouse it, had a deserted look. Along its well-sanded street, wooden and stone houses, in various states of disrepair, suggested the former wealth of Fangatau when it was prosperous with copra and pearls. Copra it still has, and no doubt pearls are still in its lagoon, but the prices of both copra and shell have declined, and Fangatau is

left with these melancholy souvenirs of a deceptive prosperity and with acquired tastes which have partly displaced the old primitive ones and yet are becoming more difficult to meet.

The houses, almost without exception ugly and topped with corrugated iron roofs which are a source of discomfort under the sun and a murderous menace in time of storm, still had acquired, here and there, a certain mellowness as if the island, so much older than they, had begun to absorb them, molding them to its ways as it molds us who sojourn in those lands and sleep beneath their stars. Large cubical stone tanks, for rainwater, stood in the ample grassy yards between the houses and the lagoon.

The interiors, as one could see through their open doors, were bare and bleak-looking, with a few mats on the wooden floors, here and there a chair, and iron beds. Nearly every house had a bed, but there, too, I never saw a native sleep on one. These pieces of furniture were for ornament and ostentation; even the wealthy Fariua and Reva preferred their mats.

Scarcely anyone was in the street or visible in the door yards. Those we did see were a listless unhealthy-looking lot. After the exuberance of gay youth at Tepuka, we were struck by the scarcity of young people and children in Fangatau.

The road runs from the sea to the lagoon, turns and runs at an angle along the lagoon passage toward the sea again. Fariua led us under an archway inscribed "*Vive la France*" and another lettered in Tuamotuan, "Hail to you, the maker of chiefs!" erected, he said, in preparation for the visit of the governor who, after all, had not arrived.

A little way beyond these arches stood Fariua's house, a square wooden structure with the inevitable red iron roof, and a porch built high from the ground on stakes. Flowers grew in front of it, in beds bordered with bottles - and one oleander bush. Behind the house, looking toward a shallow pass from the sea into the lagoon, was an old house platform, on which grew two decrepit papaya trees; a cook-house with thatched roof stood near the beach, and two fat black pigs waddled amiably at their tethers.

Fariua brought out the two chairs of his household for the visitors. Perched on them, as they stood on the high veranda, we felt absurdly up in the air, and were much more comfortable when we moved down to the mats with our host and hostess. Those were the first chairs on which we had sat in more than a quarter of a year.

Our hosts opened for us the sweet drinking-nuts of Fangatau, which are famed throughout the Tuamotu for their pungency, delicate flavor and high carbonation. Crack the shell of one of these coconuts, leaving only a thin layer of young meat between the inner juice and the air, and the pressure from within will swell out the exposed meat in a white bubble until it bursts and the liquor spurts out in a fine stream.

Sitting on that veranda, we felt the quiet of Fangatau - the brooding quiet of these depopulated islands, imparting a feeling that something, someone,

has just left. Cocks crowed, but fewer than we had heard in the ruder, healthier islands; there was little going back and forth in the streets; no merry shouting and laughter of children; no singing of the young people. The dominant sounds were the rush of wind in the tall palms and the incessant trampling of the surf.

Temiro, father of Reva, was squatting by his cooking-fire on a ruined stone terrace as we passed on our way to the Chinese store for bread - for Fangatau, like most of the Tuamotu, boasts French bread, baked by a Chinese, which sells, or did then, at one franc a loaf. A wild, bearded figure like some Old Testament prophet stared down at us from the battered platform; his hair, though gray, still thick; his eyes piercing. He was dressed in the tatters of a pair of dungarees cut down to make shorts, and an old shirt - both very dirty.

The old man, with delight, broke into a loud chant as Keneti clambered up the crumbling wall to grasp his hand:

> "Tané is lord of the sky;
> hail Tané!
> He is the sacred feast,
> the conch shell sounding the call;
> he is the regalia of the priest,
> he is the maker of kings.
> Let the rainbow flash forth across the sky!
> Hail!"

A few children clustered about with embarrassed smiles. This was Temiro, last survivor of a pagan priesthood.

A little farther down the road was the site of the ancient sacred place, Papa-te-rangi, in its time the most famous marae in all the Tuamotu. A few of the great stone backrests still stood; ancient sacred trees spread flowered branches over the deserted high place. Time was - and Temiro - remembers when it was swept clean, and the stones loomed aloft; the ten god-boxes stood neatly in even rows, repositories of ancestral relics, and the warriors ate the turtle in the presence of the spirits of their fathers from remote generations.

The land of Fangatau is kinder to the feet than that of many islands whose soil has been torn away by hurricanes and strewn with coral fragments from the ravaged reefs. We walked on a loose sandy ground, in which grew young grass and ferns. The landscape was cut across by great elongated pits, like enormous furrows.

"In ancient times," Fariua explained, "our people grew taro in those trenches. For in those times the island had more people, and fewer coconuts, and no boats came bringing foreign food.

One of my friends who has spent some time in the islands is of the opinion that they were dug to lead flood-water out of the villages in time of storm; for all I know they may have served both purposes, but at some remote islands - at Pukarua and Reao - it is certain, they are still taro fields.

As I walked back through the empty-feeling street of Teana, a tall figure in

a faded sun-helmet approached me with long strides. Burton-Poole, the English botanist, greeted me cheerily.

"I've just landed from the *Denise*," he said. "Yesterday we were at Tepuka."

And thus we had, at last, the news of Chief Maono's return and details of his experiences, if but at secondhand. The chief had been so awed by the relative complexity of Papeete that he never strayed from the one street that led from his quarters with some Tuamotuan people to the courthouse. Arriving off Tahiti, the first high island he had seen, he looked long, as a ship's officer later told us, upon the hollows between the buttressed mountains, and inquired who had dug all those great holes in the land, and why. Our friends in Papeete, to whom Keneti had written, watched over him. He went to court, and as it appeared, was himself subject to no accusations but merely gave testimony. Far from being fined or imprisoned, as his countrymen had feared, he received witness fees and a transportation allowance, which probably represented more money than Maono had ever seen all at one time.

His return trip, aboard the *Vaite*, had been in the nature of a triumphal progress. From island to island, he was honored with great feasts. Ah Kui, however, had been right; the *Vaite* was not calling at Papeete on that trip, and left the chief at Raroia, to become a Tuamotuan Odysseus wandering among strange lands in quest of a way home. There the *Denise* had found him and returned him to his beloved island.

Burton-Poole described the reception we had so often seen and heard rehearsed: the march of the phalanx of singers to the landing place and thence to Maono's house; the antics of Tangihia as leader; the speeches and the rejoicing. Regretful that we could not have seen Maono again, we thus shared, from afar, the joy of his safe return.

Here at Teana, however, I could but contrast the deathly atmosphere of the place with the healthy liveliness of Tepuka. A young girl barely looked up from the dust in which she was drawing a crude picture of the church, as I passed. Another, lying on the ruined terrace of Temiro's lair, turned to look with large mournful eyes. A child was crying in one house; I met one man on the road. The only other sign of life was the fat sleek cat that slept on Fariua's porch.

On the other side of the house, however, Reva was washing clothes on the old stone platform in the backyard; squatting before a washpan, she was beating the garments smartly with a stick. Fariua leaned against a papaya tree, watching. Seeing me return, he sat with me while we drank fresh coconuts.

"The true name of Fangatau," he said, "is Marupua. This land was famous throughout the Tuamotu as the home of the sacred learning.

"Tureikura, elder brother of Tané who raised the sky, was the first great Keeper of Wisdom. He lived in the W odd of Darkness where the spirits dwell. He passed his learning on to Taimorohua. When Taimorohua died, the true learning died with him, except what had been taught to the wise men of

this island.

"The chiefs and wise men of all the countries made ready their canoes and sailed in search of the lost wisdom. They sailed from island to island, and when they came to Fangatau, they found it at Papa-te-rangi. Mahinui, a priest of that marae, had preserved it. From him it has descended, through many generations, to Temiro and to my teacher Kamake, who is dead, and thence to Reva and me.

"This wisdom is very sacred, and by our old custom it was handed down only to our sons or to some pupil chosen for it. Reva and I have no children. So I carried this wisdom a long time in my bowels, and I was troubled, for it seemed that when we died the wisdom would die with us.

"Ua, the white man whom you know at Arué, and Keneti, from Hawaii, came to me and asked me to give them the ancient wisdom. At first I would not, for Kamake had told me not to divulge it to strangers.

"But the spirit of Kamake came to me in a dream, and told me to tell Ua and Keneti all that I knew. I was glad of this, for I could see that the new time was upon us, when the young people no longer are worthy to receive the old knowledge, and if it is to be saved, it must be through learned white men, such as Keneti and Ua, who love the natives and have true respect for wisdom, as the young people of our own race no longer have.

"So now I give them freely all that I know, and so do Reva and Temiro, as much as he can remember, for the old man is no longer clear always in his mind."

Later, Fariua and Reva chanted for us the Chant of the Lost Learning, which, they said, had been the song that the chiefs intoned in the long search. It was a repetitious recital of the names of the islands and of their chiefs, but as our hosts sang it, it was deeply stirring, with its vigorous refrain.

Evening settled silently over the village, and people straggled out into the streets - old people, for the most part, and few, but they filled the bare front room of Fariua's house. A woman addressed as Teuru chanted with Reva that noble dirge of Tuamotuan poetry, the lament of Huauri for her son:

> "The son is a wanderer, fated to voyaging,
> and I an aged woman, muttering in my grief...."

Much as I had heard Temae chant it in our house at Tepula, but in more thrilling style. These were the premier living chanteuses of the Tuamotu. In some of the better-known compositions, the crowd joined, intoning impressively the ancient syllables of a vanishing lore.

I sat on the floor near them, overcome with drowsiness, but eager to hear; propped against a hard pillow, I alternately slept and roused. I saw Fariua, as the chanting proceeded, get up and turn to the wall a lithographed representation of Christ that hung there - from no spirit of irreverence, to be sure, but quite the contrary; Fariua did not think it proper that the Savior should look upon this revival of heathen things, and would save Our Lord that

embarrassment. The picture, with the curious obstinacy sometimes exhibited by inanimate things, refused to stay turned, but swung back repeatedly to face the chanting assembly. Fariua, looking some what startled, carefully took it down and stowed it safely away. Outside, the torches of fishermen flared smokily over the dark lagoon.

They chanted then of Maui, who snared the sun that his mother might have the longer day to cook her food; how Maui fished up islands from the depths with a pearl-shell hook; how he struggled for the secret of eternal life, and lost. As the hour grew late, there were deeper, more secret and sacred chants, of the Root or Source, the Supreme One whose name, they say, was not to be spoken in ancient times save by the priests of the highest rank: a majestic, somber creation chant - how the Source slept from time without beginning, on his face upon the Wide Road of Space at the center of the Great Darkness; how he awoke and, turning his face upward, chanted and, chanting, by an effort of will created the universe and placed subordinate gods in command of its several spheres; how, chanting, he returned to the uttermost regions of Havaiki for all time.

Atea, they sang, was lord of the sky, but he proved an un worthy guardian. Not only did he neglect to maintain and improve his domain, but he preyed upon the people for his food. The supreme god had laid a tabu upon himself not to return to the world he had created, so he put into the mind of Tane the idea of killing Atea. Atea, hearing of this, sought to intercept and kill Tané. A chase ensued, up and down the young world; Tané was hampered by the narrowness be tween earth and sky, which in those days hung low, but he escaped by the furrow in which the sun moves, and took refuge above.

Tané then took the offensive. He battered at the sky from above with stones; Tangaroa burned it with fire; they tore a hole through the sky and Tane leaped down to earth and pushed the sky up that he might have room to move about. There was a great combat; Atea was hurled headlong, as Lucifer, from heaven, and slain; and his parents chanted the sad and lovely lament whence these lines:

> "Sleep ye together on the storm wind from the east ...
> The fragrance has departed."

So Tané became lord of the sky, and called the spirits to his aid. From every corner of the universe they came: the long, the short, the large, the small, the straight spirits and the humpbacked ones; standing on one another's shoulders, they raised the sky farther, to where it stands today, and swept and garnished it that the gods might dwell there for ever. He-Who-Causes-to-be-Born raised the earth from the waters, to be the home of man.

The victorious Tané descended to the presence of the Root. Tané thought, because he had received from the Root the sacred crimson girdle, that he was equal to him in power. To teach him otherwise, the supreme god set him a test: to pursue and overtake, within one lunar month, the Vanishing Island,

upon the terrace of whose temple lay the sacred crimson wreath in which resided the supreme magic power. Tané set out in pursuit of the island, but the Source hid it in mist, the chill mist of Havaiki. After one circuit of the moon had passed, he recalled Tané and, blowing away the mist with his breath, revealed where he had hidden the island; then chanted a solemn chant of his own majesty, closing with the tremendous image:

"I lean upon the winds, that they may blow."

Temiro came next day, and stayed all afternoon. A savage figure, he sat on the floor, his fierce old eyes flashing as he recalled bits of prayers from his training for a heathen priest hood. Temiro was a grown man, as age is counted in the Tuamotu, when the missionaries came, and he must have taken part in the services on the marae. He has seen the old life fade and vanish, and his people wither away. In his old age, near the century mark, he remembers, fitfully, and flares into life with fragments of stirring old chants, but he seldom continues them consecutively.

"The old man is confused," they say. A relic out of a shattered age, he sits on his ruined stonework and awaits the end.

We were up in time the next morning to attend church in the glaring white, boxlike edifice with red iron roof which bears above its door the date 1872, and to watch a beautiful though cold sunrise over the lagoon. Fariua made coffee over an open fire of husks, and fried fresh native pork - well done but unsalted, and with a smoky taste; nevertheless quite acceptable food when laid between the halves of a loaf of bread.

Fangatau in the morning has a melancholy beauty: sunlight streaming through palm fronds against mellow stone and plaster and dull red iron; the dust of the road untroubled; far off drowsy crowing of cocks, the ceaseless wind in the trees, the ceaseless surf on the reef. Human voices sound now and then - once a burst of unaccustomed talk and laughter that faintly recalled happier lands - but for the most part, the impression of Fangatau that remains with me is one of silence and desertion.

It could be as bright a land as Tepuka or Tepoto. It has better soil and less broken coral distributed over it. Papayas and banana plants grow, if not luxuriantly, in the dooryards, and there are flowers - Reva even had a rosebush. The coconut trees are taller and bear more and sweeter nuts. With its comparative fertility and its landlocked lagoon full of fish and shellfish, this must have been a populous and healthful place before the blight of foreign luxury and foreign disease fell devastatingly upon it.

From the extent of the abandoned taro trenches and other indications, we estimated that there might have been at one time a thousand people on Fangatau. Scarcely a hundred remain, and they are dying away. The reason?

"*Aita fanau*," said Fariua. "There are no births."

It is the story of many an island in the Tuamotu. Foreign clothes, foreign food, foreign houses, and worst of all, foreign disease - and, too, the decay of

the old culture - have worn away the race that once was vigorous enough to wrest a living from these unpromising rings of coral rock, or to voyage many days and nights over uncharted seas.

Fariua loaded our baggage into a handcart and he and Reva walked with us to the landing. A dangerous surf was break ing as we embarked in the whaleboat of the schooner Denise and transferred at sea to the *Tiare Tahiti's* smaller one, which Bob would not risk that day upon the reef. We sat on bags of copra, piled high in the stout boat. A line of men stood at either side awaiting the moment to shove off. They shoved as a sea crashed in; the boat floated a little way, then grounded. This process was repeated twice. The fourth effort floated us off on a big wave, but the next wave washed us back, nearly overturning the boat on the reef, which would have been the finish for some of us - but by frantic poling and rowing, they got us off. It seemed to me that they made it by a very narrow margin.

Fariua walked a long way down the beach to wave to us; we saw him standing there until he became indistinguishable against the sand and trees. Keneti and I, wrapped in blankets, lay on the cabin roof, chanting, knowing it was unlikely that we should see our friends at Fangatau again.

> "The son is a wanderer," we chanted;
> "Voyaging afar, a migratory bird,
> he goes to the Night, the last abode of rest."

37. Land of the Sewn Ships

THE GREEN ISLE of Akiali was silent and deserted as we approached in a spacious August morning and sailed along its lee. It is a handsome island, small and round like a button, a circumstance which may have impelled early voyagers to give it the name of Thrum Cap which it still bears on some charts. A village of coconut-leaf huts stood near the landing, but no people came forth in answer to our shouts. Akiaki is not permanently inhabited, but is an outlying dependency of Vahitahi, whose people go there at some seasons to prepare and load copra.

Late in the afternoon we were off Vahitahi, island of the great lagoon. In the fading light, we could barely make out, with glasses, the burly form of Ua on the beach.

In the morning, surf still piled thunderously over the reef.

"I won't risk my boat and your lives in that," said Bob.

A dugout canoe came out in response to our signals - manned by my namesake Mokio and two other Vahitahi men. Both the shore and the *Tiare Tahiti* went out of sight as the tiny craft, bearing Keneti and me with the natives, dipped between great waves. Water poured over the low sides constantly, faster, it seemed, than it could be thrown back by the boy who bailed with amazing speed. Once, as a particularly heavy wave struck the canoe a staggering blow and the water sloshed about our knees, Mokio turned to me quickly between paddle strokes.

"Can you swim?" he inquired.

He and his companions, however, by brilliant seamanship and hard paddling at critical moments, put us on the reef right side up, though drenched to the waist.

Ua, large and dynamic, met us at the landing and walked with us down the single street to our lodging in the house of Vatoa, the island's most prominent Mormon. Vatoa's house was a large, square, two-story structure, the most pretentious dwelling in the village - with a garden: papaya, breadfruit, bananas, figs, though none bearing abundantly. From a crazy veranda one ducked under a low doorway - or bumped one's head on it - to ascend a precarious stairway to the upper room where a high, unevenly stuffed and uncomfortable bed is provided for guests.

Vahitahi is a long atoll with a beautiful enclosed lagoon, dotted, like that of Tepuka, with white heaps of shells. One side is bare reef, the other heavily wooded; the trees are tall and prolific. The street and grounds are not as tidy as those of other Tuamotu islands I had seen; they were littered with old

coconuts and fallen fronds, but there was little coral on the ground, and a broad sandy beach behind the reef.

The village is on the seaward side, near the landing, and there are smooth bare places worn in the reef, great grooves where boats have been dragged up out of reach of the waves. For Vahitahi is an ancient land of voyagers; there the old Tuamotuan seagoing vessels linger still in use; it is the land of the sewn ships.

Under sheds in different parts of the village, I saw two of these remarkable craft: shaped like a whaleboat, larger, and built of hewn slabs of wood sewn together with coconut fiber. They had sockets for mast and sail, and a distinctive steering gear, with a tiller mounted on a pivot. The largest I saw was not over thirty feet long, not a large ship in which to go to sea - though our own *Tiare Tahiti* was only about forty - but sturdy and apparently seaworthy for their size.

"We go in them," said Mokio, "to Akiaki and to Nukuta vake, to get copra."

"In the old times," added Tupuhoe, the stout young chief, "they were two and three times as long, and men sailed in them to all the islands of the sea."

"They were narrower than these," explained Keneti, who had studied the accounts of early explorers and had models of the ancient ships in the museum. "They were bound together in pairs for stability, like the great double dugout canoes of Hawaii. These have been built over and widened out to imitate the white men's whaleboats; and the outriggers have been taken off. They are much less safe that way, but still the natives make long trips in them."

In these islands where suitable trees do not grow large enough to make dugout canoes, they were built up thus from small pieces.

Probably most of the Pacific was explored with such ships. With paddle and sail they voyaged from island to island, discovering new lands, refinding forgotten ones. The stars and the prevailing winds, the currents and the tides, were their charts; they chanted as they reefed and clewed the mat sails or bent their backs to the deep-sea paddle. War fleets, too, swooped upon far islands, and the earth ovens smoked with the cooking of the slain. The people of Vahitahi, unlike those of more isolated Tepuka, were cannibals in pre-missionary times - and the young men and women still have good teeth.

The houses of Vahitahi are quite the ugliest I saw in the Tuamotu: high, square, tasteless structures of wood, lacking the mellowness of those of Fangatau. Some dignity, however, attaches to the weather-stained stones of the priest's house and of the church, over whose door is crowded the lettering of its name: *Ana Peata* - Saint Anne.

The village street, though less busy than those of Tepuka, lacked the deserted look of Fangatau. Perhaps I was becoming accustomed to the more "civilized" islands - or a meeting with some pleasant young people gave me a more cheerful impression. At the house of Raupaki - an appallingly boxlike

structure on a high foundation much too large for it, giving it a curiously foreshortened appearance - there was laughter and song. A neat, smiling girl, with a pleasant face and sound teeth, sat in the doorway, playing a guitar with the same monotonous drone that I recalled from other islands in those seas. She introduced herself as Ngapehu, and her companion as Tetápahi; a real beauty when she smiled, though her face in repose had a trace of sullenness that sometimes appears in the features of the mild-tempered, kindly Polynesian. Several young men lounged about the place, sitting on the broken enclosing wall or on the wooden floor.

The house within was bare and uncomfortable in appearance. A coconut-leaf or pandanus-leaf house would not have seemed so, few as its furnishings might be. There is something desolate and depressing about nearly all the natives' borrowings from the white man's material culture. Clothing is ill cut and gaudy, and transforms the often superbly modeled native forms into grotesque caricatures; foreign food is likely to be ill cooked, and its use upsets the time-grooved balance of native life so that its effects are seen in decaying teeth, spotted complexions and more serious ailments. Native things, however crude, seldom offend the eye; but native adaptations of foreign things too often hideously symbolize the tragedy of native life where it has come in close contact with the white man's "civilization."

The dwellings of Vahitahi in general seemed less tidy than the coconut huts of the less "advanced" islands, partly because of their foreign construction and state of disrepair; partly by reason of the accumulation of possessions that had resulted from Vahitahi's comparative wealth and which, in default of other storage accommodations, were piled on the floor.

The occupants were singing a song that seemed somehow familiar. I listened closely.

"Ena kona re no mo, no mo,
ena kona ré no mom?

Memory flashed back to the days when I had first heard that song: a small boy, walking in the street of a Middle Western village, passing the saloon which I had been told was the abode of wickedness; glancing fearfully in at the open door whence sounded the bump of heavy glasses beating time on the bar, and the jolly strains of "Ain't Gonna Rain No More."

As a guest, I must oblige with "Show Me the Way to Go Home," which no doubt has thereby been added to the Vahitahi repertory.

"But I like native songs better," I told them.

They sang several, among them the farewell songs that are numerous in these islands that know so many farewells. The haunting airs, admirably adapted to the three-chord technique of Tuamotuan guitars, sang themselves unforgettably into my mind.

Polynesian songs suffer greatly in translation. Whey are likely to seem flat and prosaic. There is a charm in the native syllables, themselves, that vanishes

in the alien English; an aroma too delicate to persist in our harsher tongue. There is, too, something in Polynesian voices that clothes the baldest text with island magic; some subtle quality of enunciation, of pitch, of vocal timbre, that calls up all the associations of island life. Once in a San Francisco lunchroom, I fell to wondering about the waitress; she was as white as I, but there was something in her movements that recalled the sway of palms, the curve of surf on tropic beaches. It was only a suspicion, but when she spoke, in faultless English as she did, I knew. It was a Hawaiian voice, in that city of the chill mists, a voice out of Polynesia, mellow with the accents of an easeful race.

So now I never hum to myself the melody of a Vahitahi song but it brings the feel of the salt breeze over the coral land, the smell of coconut oil on ruddy-dark hair, and the island voices blending with the deep steady thud of guitars in a dark tenderness, full of the casualness and content, the easy joy and sudden sadness, of the South Sea. And the soft syllables mean, to us who have known them in their home, something in their own sound that vanishes when their approximate overt significance is set forth.

The visitor must dance, too, despite his protests of ignorance. Guitar-beat throbbed into the blood; feet that had stirred the pebbles of Tepuka so many evenings could not remain quiet here.

"I give you a new name," said Tetápahi, as I left after singing many Hawaiian songs, "a name of the land. We shall call you Tangi-the Singer."

All this was repeated more elaborately in the evening at the chief's house - a stone house with a high platform of concrete which served on occasion as judge's bench, but normally as the bed of the chief and his family.

The ten girls and dozen or more young men who gathered there were better dressed than we, who had brought only dungarees and Hawaiian palaka-jackets off the ship. The young men were smart in white trousers and shirts, the girls in print dresses and - such was the sophistication of this place - shoes! I noted, however, that as the evening advanced they were glad to remove these latter badges of civilization. Over all hung a pervasive incense-like scent that at first I could not identify; an Oriental fragrance as of the sandalwood for which the Hawaiians perished long ago. Not until in Ua's house I chanced upon a can of the talcum powder that is used universally on the island - a well-known American brand in tended for babies - did I recognize the scent that mingled with that of coconut oil and tournefortia flowers.

Our acquaintances of the morning were there, but the belle of this gathering was a tiny, dark-faced lass who answered to the name of Pikura, or Precious Perfume.

Next day the elders chanted in Ua's house; similarly to what we had heard on other islands, but in a more normal voice and with nearer approach to melody. I recognized, again, the moving lament:

"The child is a wanderer:
ranging remote lands,
he will not know the hour of his mother's death!"

The savage ancient poetry, the aged voices, sounded oddly out of place in the comparatively civilized setting of Ua's living room. They should have been in a leaf hut, at midnight, by dim light of burning copra or a crude wick in a bottle of coconut oil.

Tetápahi was pounding pandanus fruit between stones to extract the inner kernel. All over the village the sound of similar pounding throbbed in the sea breeze - an echo of the far time when these were a "pandanus people," before the coconut had taken the place of the screwpine as the foundation of low-island economy.

The girl held out a few of these kernels in the palm of her hand. They were about the size of pine nuts and somewhat like them in taste. With starch scraped from the fruit, and sometimes the fruit itself baked whole in the earth oven, they were once an important food on many a low island.

Our Mormon hostess had guests, the second day, from a copra schooner, and most of the population gathered there in the evening. The pious Vatoa, however, revealed unaccountable scruples when Tetápahi and Ngapehu, resplendent in red gowns, proposed dancing. They danced, nevertheless, not in Vatoa's house, but in the small quarters of Charlie, the Reao boy-of-all-work in Vatoa's household. They took time out, there, for us to repeat over and over the Hawaiian "King's Serenade," that they might learn it for future occasions.

The hour latened. Vatoa came bulging in to end the parry. We walked out into the empty, darkened street. Two young men of the village hailed us, to ask for a light.

"No good, this place," one of them remarked. "We have no sweethearts. The Chinese take all the girls."

There are five Chinese in Vahitahi, an unusual number for an island of that size. The eldest, a blind man, has practically all the natives in his debt, and levies an assessment every time they sell a load of copra. Being the capitalists of the place, and controlling the supply of dresses, hair ornaments, ear rings and scented talcum, it is not surprising that these merchants have, as rumored, the pick of the young womanhood of the land.

Ngapehu, however, walked with us seaward, and sat with us on the cool sand, facing the breeze that blew from the sea, rustling the tall palms. We talked, and then grew quiet, melting into the spell of the night. Vahitahi, I learned, has re tained more of the ancient life than appears on the surface. At certain seasons, its men and women gird themselves with dance-garments of green coconut leaves that stand out stiffly like ballet skirts, and perform the ancient food rites, the exorcising of demons, and the ancestor ceremonies. There is a certain Moko who must be lured out of the forest and shut up in a coconut shell, which is then buried in the sand. Tupuhoe and others of his

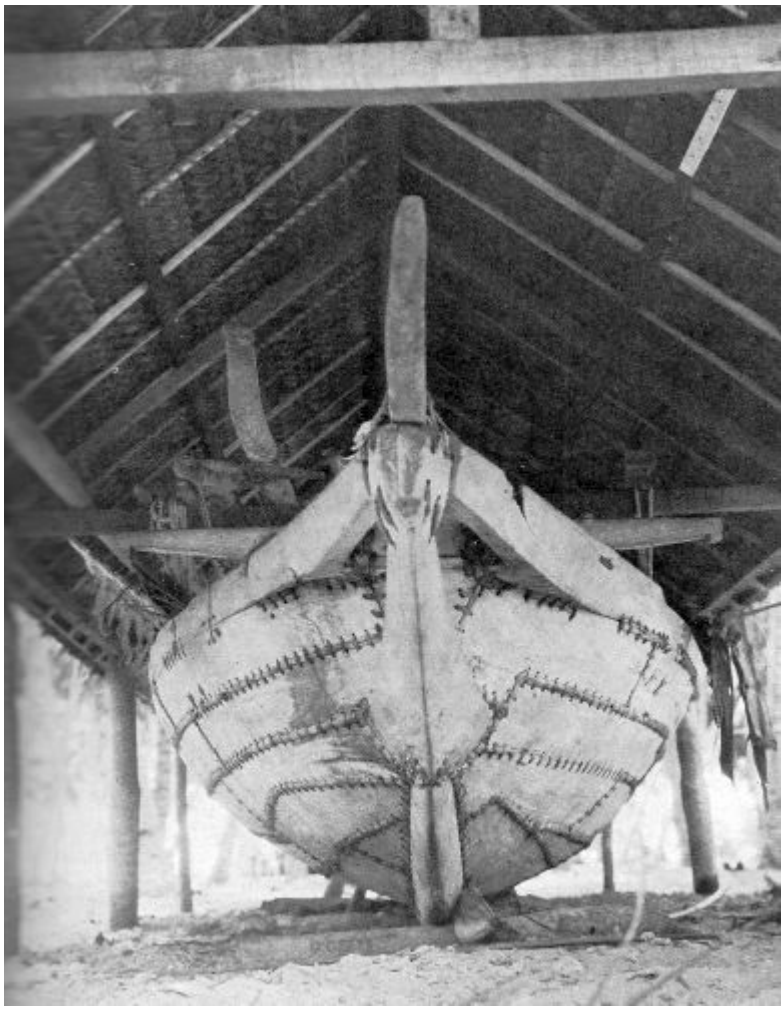
generation, men in late youth or early middle life, still are skilled in the spear-drill of the elder time; and, as I knew from hearing Ruea and her friends, the old folk of Vahitahi know the sacred literature of the past.

Ngapehu grew silent. Her hair, fragrant with scented coconut oil, blew across our faces as she sat between us. She was asleep. We aroused her and took her to her home at Tupuhoe's house.

Next morning the surf was still battering the reef on which a landing-boat from the *Moana* had been crushed the day before. Men and women took leave of us as we entered the landing-boat: "Life to you, Keneti; life to you, Tangi" Precious Perfume, with her possessions rolled up in a pareu, begged to be taken along. An earnest discussion between us and her brother was necessary before she could be dissuaded.

Here Keneti and I, who had been companions in good and ill fortune these months, must part, he to sail east to Tatakoto, I to return to Tahiti lest the *Islander* sail north without me. I climbed aboard the *Tiare*; Keneti, waving his tall Tepuka hat from the *Moana's* whaleboat, lightened the parting with a reminiscence of one of our favorite jokes - an imitation of old Kararo's long-drawn, nasal "NHhhhhhhhhh!"

The *Moana* lifted white flowing sails and moved swiftly eastward; the *Tiare*, with a fair wind for Tahiti, gathered headway in the opposite direction.



Two of the ancient Tuamotuan ships, built of slabs of *tou* wood sewn together with coconut fiber or pandanus fiber, are still in use at Vahitahi, for voyages to islands far out of sight of the home port. This specimen, Tevaoroa ia Raka, is 23½ feet long. It is daid much larger ones were built in pre-discovery times.

Great trenches scar the landscape of many Tuamotu islands. At Reao and Pukarua they are still taro fields. Thus, even on the hard coral of the atolls, man bends the stubborn substance of nature to his needs.

38. The "Tiare Tahiti"

THE LAND OF THE LONG LAGOON slid out of sight beneath the rounded skin of the Pacific. We were at sea again, a tiny moving sliver of wood and canvas between the vast blue concentric domes of ocean and sky.

The *Tiare Tahiti* was a forty-foot cutter, such as are used throughout the Tuamotu for voyaging from island to island, where they have largely replaced the old native craft. Loaded far beyond the possible limits of a nonexistent Plimsoll line, with native passengers, their mats and pigs and belongings, and often stuffed with copra in every conceivable stowage place, they are perhaps the most frequent craft in those waters. Father Paul at Vahitahi had built his own ship of this type, and went voyaging with a native crew far out of sight of land, but always found his way safely to port.

The *Tiare Tahiti* had seen her copra-carrying days; Bob, her owner, had traded for a few years among the islands, until, like other foreign skippers, he found the competition of the Chinese and the restrictions of the colonial laws too burdensome.

Bob had led a fairly adventurous life. Running away to sea from an academy in the American East, he had shipped for far and strange ports, up and down European, African and Asiatic coasts. But with an inarticulateness somewhat unusual in a sailor, he had little to communicate of these experiences save fragmentary reminiscences of amorous encounters in Algiers, Yokohama or Amsterdam. He was the type of Carl Sandburg's United States marine "with a girl on his knee for a memory in ports circling the earth and he said: Tell me how to say three things and I always get by - gimme a plate of ham and eggs - how much? - and - do you love me, kid?"

Reaching Tahiti in his wanderings, he had invested his savings, taking advantage of favorable exchange, in the cutter, and after two years of island trading, had sailed her to Hawaii by way of the Marquesas and returned. Now she was under charter to the Bishop Museum as a transfer ship for members of the expedition, and we were bound for Papeete to pick up that royal Polynesian scholar Te Rangi Hiroa, known as widely by that chiefly Maori name as by his English one of Dr. Peter Buck, who was to join Keneti at Tatakoto.

Tall and slim and blond, with a sailor's easy rolling gait and a slow down-east speech, Bob might have been of the breed of those New England whalers who swarmed the Pacific a century ago. The South Seas had softened his eastern ways, but not the frosty gleam of his blue eyes as, cap set at a jaunty angle over his yellow hair, he stood at the wheel of the Flower of Tahiti,

gazing out calculatingly at the foam dappled sea and up at the curving canvas overhead.

Matini, the official captain, was an island man by birth, and a veteran of those seas. Born in Rurutu in the Austral Islands, of mixed Polynesian and American ancestry, he was of the best type of inter-island shipmaster. An unerring navigator, and a man looked upon as with the standing of a chief, there could have been no better choice for the captain of French citizenship required by law. If he had a fault, it was over caution, a healthy one in those waters. In his younger days he had lost a schooner on a reef, and the experience had made him one of the wariest skippers in French Oceania.

"I've seen every island in the Paumotu and never been ashore at any," he would say.

Among those justly termed Dangerous Islands, he would take no chances with his ship for any lure of shore. All the two weeks the *Tiare Tahiti* had lain off Tepuka and Tepoto, Matini had not set foot off the deck of the cutter, and I sus pect that he never slept through one of the watches stood by the Tahitian sailors without getting up from time to time to check the position of the ship with reference to currents and wind.

Tau was a smallish, dark-brown Tahitian, quiet and will ing, but handicapped by an apparently chronic dysentery an ailment not uncommon in his native island.

"If he'd take care of himself and not drink ashore, he could be cured," grumbled Matini with the profound contempt for inefficiency that was characteristic of this somewhat unusual island captain.

Tehio was a fat, broad-faced, smiling, cinnamon-brown sailor, whom Matini cursed for laziness and suspected of sleeping at the wheel. He was a poorer seaman, but more entertaining company than the taciturn Tau. Tehio was also the cook, and with a pan of rice and the milk of ripe coconuts, of which a supply was carried in the tiny galley forward, he could turn out a dish as tasty as any chef in much more ambitious surroundings.

"When we sailed from Hawaii to Tahiti, all the galley we had was an oil tin in a box of sand," Bob recalled.

Now he had a stove, fueled with dry sticks cut on the islands visited. Every day as Marini took his eleven o'clock sight, Tehio would peel long, white, firm Tahitian yams and boil them in a huge pot. At islands where we could trade oil tins for provisions, we had chicken; while the terns' eggs lasted, Tehio baked the most delicious pancakes I had ever tasted; at sea we alternated between curried corned beef and curried tinned salmon.

There was no room for furniture aboard the cutter, and we squatted native fashion on the floor of the cabin or leaned forward from the edges of the bunks, as Tehio set the food on the hatch-cover over the auxiliary engine. All ate together, with the exception of the man at the wheel, though Matini grumbled that this free and easy mingling was bad for discipline.

Tupu, the new member of the crew, was admittedly of little use at sea.

Keneti and I had long since awarded Tupu the distinction of being the stupidest native of Tepuka. But Tupu deserved more credit for good intention than any of us were inclined to give him. His unfailing good humor and his untiring readiness to use his mighty physical strength to help others should have gone far to make up for his slowness of wit and his untidy appearance. Looking back, I regret that I was not kinder to Tupu; for the brutish-looking half-savage was, I am convinced, sincerely fond of me. Even after I cast aside, at Tepuka, the name he had given me, and made him return the pocket-knife he had borrowed - with its nail-file blade broken off from trying to file fishhooks - he remained faithfully devoted. Long after I returned to my own country I discovered, in one of my notebooks, a pathetic appeal written in poorly spelled Tahitian in his laborious, uneven hand:

"Life be to you, my friend Pari-tané! I, Tupu, the son of Tahukanui, greet you. This is my thought: give me a shirt for our voyage to Tahiti."

Poor Tupu! I did not see the note till long afterward, and he went to sea in the clothes in which he stood: a faded pareu, a ragged singlet, a raggeder pair of dungarees cut off at the knees, and the shreds of one of my old handkerchiefs bound around his head. He suffered with cold at sea, but he never complained - and he never answered even a reprimand with out a smile.

At mid-morning of the second day we sighted Nengo nengo - "one beeg island," as Matini had nominated it, and big indeed from a mariner's viewpoint, but consisting of only a few scattered islets between which the surf crashed on a long expanse of reef. It was a bleak and lonely looking land miles of bare coral, and a few low trees on the farther side. We hove to in its lee, and sent Tupu and Tau ashore with spears. We could see them picking their way over the reef, now and then darting the pronged poles into a pool or crevice of the red shelf on which the waves curled.

Two hours later they returned with a big bucketful of fish: bright cerulean blue ones, brown speckled ones, and puffy ones with spikes all over them.

"At this island all fish are good to eat; there are no poisonous ones," Matini explained. Tau had even gathered a heap of conical shellfish, which Tehio served up in coconut sauce next day.

So, with fresh fish providing a welcome relief from a diet out of tins, we slid along steadily before the wind and sea, all day under the sun, all night under the southern stars. We were making fast time. The cutter was almost sailing herself; there was little to do aboard; Bob and I lay on the deckhouse, sunning our light-greedy hides.

The fifth day we passed Meetia, rosy and unreal in the early light. Tupu gazed at it with open mouth. It was the first high land he had seen.

He exclaimed in amazement: "It is a very all land!"

"Wait till you see Tahiti; that is much taller," replied Tehio, with a grin.

Tehio was in high spirits as we neared Tahiti, chanting a rapid erotic dance-chant at the wheel while the sharp peaks of Tautira notched the horizon.

Matini muttered, with traditional sea captain disapproval, as Bob rallied Tehio on his anticipation of a sailor's delights ashore among the flower-crowned charmers of Papeete:

"A captain should never be familiar with the crew. Keep them at a distance. That's the only way to handle them."

Matini, being half native himself, doubtless felt the necessity of asserting his white blood. To me, conditioned by long residence in Hawaii, and to Bob, with similar acceptance of the natives, derived from living in Tahiti, the drawing of racial or class lines on so small a ship seemed a silly convention.

The changing-hued sculptured mountain of Meetia remained in sight till dusk, a dream-island painted on the vast blue and white canvas of an ocean day. Ahead, the golden haze hung over the weather-sharpened peaks of Little Tahiti -tantalizingly near as the wind fell, toward night, becalming us with little more than fifty miles to go.

After the months away, we were impatient for Tahiti, each according to his interest: for Tau and Tehio, the rum and women of the port; for Bob and Matini, reunion with their wholesome brown wives; for Tupu, his first experience of civilization; for me, baths, cold beer, a change from tinned corned beef and tinned pale salmon; more important, mail and, if the schedule had not entirely broken down, the *Islander*, already past due in Papeete from the islands south, to take me home.

Yet I have known few more pleasant days at sea than aboard the *Tiare Tahiti* - idle days in sun and salt wind, skim ming that quiet sea; days whose easy monotony was broken only by sight of a whale off the starboard bow, or a bit of wreckage from the reef-shattered *Ville de Papeete* floating by.

All the next morning we crept nearer, catching little puffs of wind that drove us briefly forward, only to slacken and leave the sails flapping disconsolately against the mast. Tahiti, as we coasted along its reef-fringed shores, looked not unlike my own islands of Hawaii, with its patches of iron-red soil, its misty mountains and green lowlands, and deep stream sculptured valleys, a bright and fragrant land under the tropic sun.

Matini, solid and gently grave beneath his low-crowned hat with the band of brown Rurutu seeds and white small shells, steered through a passage scarcely wider than the ship, between submerged reefs that made a thin line of white foam. We coasted along the garden-like shore, catching quick glimpses of native fishermen, cyclists wheeling along the Arue road, a white woman in a red bathing suit sliding down from a bay horse in a mass of flowers.

To us, fresh from three months and more in the outlying islands, Papeete seemed a metropolis. The white hull and superstructure of a French cruiser, the long dark bulk of a Messageries Maritimes liner, the tall green of a Union Mail ship loomed amid the masts of copra schooners and foreign yachts in the quiet harbor.

At that time, this arrival seemed to mark a period. I had turned back. Here was civilization again; the real South Seas - the enchanted ocean of low red-

rimmed coral islands and simple, kindly fisherfolk - was behind me; my face was set toward home.

The charm of Tahiti is in the "districts," away from the colonial capital. There the sun-drenched days idle easefully into nights of song, and time seems a remote and artificial thing of little reality between the timeless sea and sky.

The visitors at Tepuka occupied one of the finest houses in the village....The children soon began to doubt that the white men would eat them.

Wearing the ancient ceremonial dress of coconut leaves, the men and women of Vahitahi still dance the sacred figures in the food ceremony, and lure the demon Moko into a coconut shell to be buried in the sand.

V

"Tuamotu White Men"

39. "Tahiti, Pearl of the Sea"

THERE WAS MAIL for me at Papeete:

" ... I can now say definitely there will be no opening for you when you get back. If you want to talk with me on your return, OK, but it will be a .. "

How shall I write of Tahiti - of poverty and suspense, of anxiety and waiting? I was an anomaly in that country, neither wealthy enough to be a "tourist" nor quite so poor as to be a beachcomber; a sojourner existing precariously on a tiny hoard of dwindling francs, sleeping on a ship in the harbor and subsisting frugally on the dubious offerings of dingy Chinese coffee-shops; wearing clothes soiled and tattered from weeks at sea and months on coral islands and, even when new, better suited to wave-drenched decks and mat-covered native floors than to the tropic formalities of the colonial capital.

Thus I saw with somewhat different eye that glamorous island named by voyagers of old "the new Cythera," and in its own songs of today "Pearl of the Pacific." The *Islander* was weeks overdue and there was no word of save that a month or six weeks earlier she had sent a call from Mangareva for fuel. I had long overstayed my expected time away from home; I had not prepared for a sojourn in Tahiti, and with my accustomed employment taken from me, was more than ever anxious to get back to find new means of livelihood and rejoin Margaret, who was carrying on bravely in my absence.

So I fretted in the petty-colonial atmosphere of Papeete, longing, if I must linger in Tahiti, to go to the "districts," in scenes of uncluttered mountain and shore, among natives of the same far-scattered race as the friends on the coral island I had left.

It could have been done, had I had any advance notice of the *Islander's* tardy arrival. Big open buses, crowded with natives, chickens, groceries, and pigs, rumbled each morning east and west. For a few francs they would have taken me to the cool cavern pool of Maraa; to Mataiea, by whose warm lagoon Rupert Brooke had idled away deep-flowering days of peace; to Papenoo of the great water, and Hitiaa, home of giants of old. I would have chosen, rather, to walk, resting by night in the houses of district chiefs or, in emergency, spreading my mat under the trees as in the Tuamotu. It would not often have been necessary thus to tempt the rain; the people of rural Tahiti are not yet so weaned from their traditional hospitality by contact with the white man's greed, as to re fuse a wayfarer shelter, especially if he can stammer a few words of their language.

I might have climbed with them the somber mountains where wild

oranges ripen on vine-tangled slopes, and swum in the green crater lake of haunted Vaihiria. There would have been wide sun-washed days and deep star-spattered nights-and always song and dancing and laughter; and, in the quiet gloom of some thatched, bamboo-walled house, old tales of magic and mystery, of love and of heroic deeds. But I was fettered by uncertainty that oppressed me more and more from day to day. At any moment the tuba-tone of the sampan's whistle might sound, and the quick rhythm of her engine shatter the quiet of the bay. Any day a schooner might come in from Rapa or Tubuai, or a government message from Rikitea, bringing word that the ship was lost in those danger-strewn waters where so many schooners and cutters and the only steamship in French Oceania had gone down that very summer or were breaking to bits upon the hungry reefs - in which case it would be necessary at once to set about finding some other way of getting home.

Hidden in some village miles from Papeete, with only uncertain communication with the port, or walking some distant road beneath the tamanu trees, I should be too far out of touch with my only means of return. The ship might come and go, and I not hear of it.

Nor was there any way of knowing over how many days or weeks or months I must, in either case, stretch the pitiful sheaf of broad, filthy, useless-looking but indispensable Banque d'Indo-Chine notes which, for a foreigner in a French Oceanic colony, there seldom is means of replenishing.

Looking back now, it seems ridiculous that I did not place more faith in the happy disposal of events. But it is one thing to sit at a desk and write calmly of a situation long past, and another to be immediately within that situation. My stake was in the sampan; I was stranded in the port until she appeared or until I had definite news of her whereabouts. So prudence prevailed over inclination, and my horizons in the Nouvelle Cythère were bounded by the black sand beach of Arué and the Pool of Loti on the east, and on the west by the breezy bungalow of Hinao Schenck at Punaauia and the roaring cobble beach beyond it - most of the time, indeed, by the Papeete waterfront with its ever-changing views of Moorea and the quaint streets and mingled Oriental and provincial European architecture of the town.

Yet the scenes I thus forwent are but those that most sojourners for more than a day in Tahiti know; my enforced confinement and the circumstances in which I found myself became an adventure in a different Tahiti. It was a dreary enough existence - waiting, always waiting. But by means of it I came to know something of that other Papeete that the tourists on the Union Mail boats do not see, or touch but in passing: the Papeete that dwells in alleyways, too often with no food for the morrow, but with a surface contentment born of a vast indolent fatalism or of an easy trust in tomorrow's fortune, and walks flower-crowned and singing by the moonlit sea.

On the gently sloping cabin roof of the *Tiare Tahiti*, at her anchorage at Fareute, shipmate Tupu and I spread our mats - a bit of Tepuka beneath us in a strange harbor. There we slept deeply to the lulling land breeze, beneath

wide moons or solemnly whirling stars, while the water lapped lightly at the cutter's side and the bells of our own ship and of the ancient schooners that moldered alongside in a crumbling row tinkled the night's half hours. Sometimes rain driving down from the huge shadowy mountain-thrust of Aorai sent us leaping below to the bunks in the stuffy cabin - but my memories of Fareute in darkness hours are mainly of cool, quiet rest on deck, soothed by the caressing touch of the island night.

As morning lit colored fires in the harbor, we would bathe hastily on deck from the oil tin of fresh water that Tupu had carried the night before from the nearby shipyard. Looking overside into the clear shallows, we could watch the Moorish Idol fish waving fantastic barred tails.

We would walk carefully down the wabbling plank that connected the afterdeck with the low shore, and up between the machine sheds and scattered dwellings to the coffee-shop on the Broom Road. Breakfast was a loaf of the tough but nourishing Chinese-baked French bread and a cup apiece of the bitter, muddy fluid that passes, in these shops, for coffee. Battered wooden benches stood at grimy tables, where scrawny chickens picked crumbs from the floor at our feet and long, serpentine cats waited to lap up fallen drops of the evaporated milk with which the *Tinito* diluted his evil brew.

We would sit a few minutes on the leaning veranda of the coffee-shop, watching morning broaden over the bay, natives paddling out to sea in their V-shaped canoes, bearing large conical woven fish-traps, and city workers trundling by on their endless procession of bicycles.

Tupu would marvel: "There is no end to the wheels!"

Tupu would return to his mysterious occupations aboard, and I would sally town-ward to the agent's office to be disappointed each day anew with no word of the ship.

It seemed certain that the Islander must either be disabled or so near that it "was not worthwhile to radio ahead; else Bill surely would have sent us a message. Long afterward I learned that Bill at that time had been more or less helpless. He has received instructions forbidding him to send messages except in emergency involving safety of ship or ship's company. As he explained, in writing his examination before leaving Honolulu, he had answered the questions correctly but in the wrong order, and hence had failed of his operator's license - after having served as a professional operator for years!

But I could not guess that then; I could only wait until word came.

The *Tiare Tahiti* was our only lodging; there, seated on a bunk in the steaming cabin, leaning over the typewriter on the engine-hatch cover, I would try to put together the confused notes of earlier wanderings. Much of the time this activity was interrupted: the hatch cover was removed and Tahitian-French mechanics were working on the decrepit motor whose parts lay strewn over the cabin floor. The deck was sticky with fresh paint; there was day-long hammering as carpenters caulked the hull or drove new nails to hold the bottom together where it had been strained and bulged out ward by

the solid concrete ballast.

The heavy, drowsy malaise of tropic noon stole on; the pounding ceased; men bicycled to their homes for food and sleep. Quiet descended, slow and ponderous, like a heavy hand. I would eat slimy, ill-prepared Tahitian fish and yams in the Chinese shops on the marketplace, or in the market itself buy a handful of fat yellow bananas and share them with Tupu at the ship. Or Tupu himself, if in funds, would bring from the coffee-shop by the sea a high-heaped plate of *maa Tinito* - a greasy mixture of rice, fat pork, beans and Chinese cabbage - which, true to Polynesian custom, he would insist was for us both.

"This," he would say, beaming, "is the food belonging to us two."

The sleep-hunger of tropic noonday would seize our heads and limbs; the mind of the white man, abandoning its pride, would cease to function; the whole town slept, hidden away beneath roofs and trees from the vertical sun. On the mat that had been plaited for me by the daughters of Tuata and Hei, sleep would draw a sudden curtain over the fretful anxiety of those waiting days.

Afternoon brought another trip to the agency, still blank of news. The life of Papeete went on about us: the fashioning of landing-boats in the shipyards, the slow trafficking in the shops, the bicycles, passing, passing to and fro.

Afternoon deepened over the drowsy town; shops and offices closed; the sky assumed pale tender hues; the rocky pinnacles of Moorea glowed opalescent in the mellow light. At the hour when those we had left at Tepuka were sitting around their fires of husks with the good food of the land, Tupu and I, in those first days, would share again the dubious nourishment of *maa Tinito*. Once he came proudly bearing an orange, which he divided scrupulously, and again a bit of dry Chinese-baked cake. Once I bought a loaf of stale bread, Tupu produced from somewhere a ripe coconut, and we squatted, Tuamotu fashion, with that humble meal upon the deck. Sunset spread incredible streams of color on the sky; Moorea flamed in jewel-like loveliness, an unearthly world like that floating island which the god Tané pursued in vain, or the Hidden Land of Kane in Hawaiian legend, where flow the eternal waters of life.

"Let's go for a walk," suggested Tupu, and we wandered into the cool evening, as Papeete awakened from the somnolent heat of day. The town is rather dark at night; dotted with little groups of men and girls standing about, or sitting in corners with arms around each other. In one house there is music; in a dark street a girl leans against a man, embracing him with silent intensity. Twice a week there are motion pictures - third-rate American films or long-winded French serials, or religious subjects. Tupu derived perpetual entertainment from standing in the street watching the crowd, more people than he had ever seen assembled together in his life. I too found it amusing, for it was a show in itself: Tahitian and part-Tahitian girls in their best dresses, sprigs of native gardenia fragrant in their hair; French and Tahitian

sailors, soldiers and gendarmes; mysterious women trailing tropical scents; bicycles whose riders waved electric torches by way of headlights; skirl of accordions in the theater before the show opened; lighted carts of Chinese vendors with ice cream cones, spirally peeled oranges, coconuts and cakes.

The first Sunday brought two memorable experiences for Tupu: his first movie, opening a new world of wonder, and his first ice cream cone.

"It is hot," he exclaimed; "it burns!"

There was an insinuating charm about the harbor back water where the cutter lay? old schooners awaiting buyer or charter older ones rotting away; dismantled hulks propped on stilts, serving as homes for native families and patched with panels of coconut leaf and odd bits of canvas or lumber. A Rurutu family lived in the wreck nearest us; we used to see the husband and father each day sweeping the refuse from the crumbling deck, as he followed in this foreign land the custom of his country where the housework is done by men. Fish leaped and splashed in the darkness; a cool breeze flowed down from the mysterious dark bulk of mountain; moonlight flooded the deck, and from afar down the curving shore sounded guitars and soft Tahitian voices singing.

The fish worried us - so near and tempting. We rigged lines and angled over the low sides, but they would swallow no bait we could procure, or would nibble it daintily all around the hook and slish away with a saucy flick of gaudy striped tails.

To Tupu, who had lived from earliest childhood by fishing, this was a new experience. In his leisure hours he fashioned spears from poles tipped with filed nails, and we cast them mightily, but even the atoll-reared Tupu was not quick enough to capture these agile creatures. As funds sank lower, he borrowed Matini's tiny one-man canoe and paddled forth in quest of that never-failing resort of the hungry of his own land, the wavy-mouthed tridacna clam, but returned at sunset with an empty basket.

"In this country," he mourned, "I don't know the fishing places."

Maru the son of Maru, returning from a cruise on the government gunboat, led Tupu on another excursion for the elusive shellfish. They did come back with a catch, but it was pitifully small to feed Maru and his younger brothers and sister, and his sick wife, besides Tupu. I forbore to burden their generosity, and accepted only a single clam to comply with Polynesian courtesy.

Maru was a likable lad, with the straight nose and slightly slanting eyes, the warm brown skin and black straight hair of his family, a quick friendly smile beneath high cheek bones, and easy grace of limbs. He seemed only mildly curious for news of his relatives and former neighbors at Tepuka, even of his stormy-mooded sister and his youngest brother, Punua, that oddly lovable nuisance, purloiner of cigarette butts and beggar of onions. A gleam of recognition flickered in his soft brown eyes as he examined the tall-

crowned hat I still wore.

"Made by Tauhoa," he identified it, appraising its skillful workmanship.

Maa Tinito soon lost all savor for me, though Tupu continued to consume and apparently to thrive on the repulsive, indigestible mess. As my acquaintance with alleyway Papeete grew, I dined in downtown shops where alleged European food was obtainable by going into back-room kitchens, pointing out this or that tray, and indicating how much one was prepared to spend. Now and then I indulged in the luxury of a real five-franc meal at the neat checkered table on the veranda of "the Czech's" not only for the best food, to American taste, in Tahiti, but for talk with Americans and other foreigners who frequented the place.

Thus I learned to live reasonably well in Papeete on seven francs a day - forty-six and two-thirds American cents distributed over three meals. It is possible to exist, as Tupu and I did in our early days there, on thirty cents daily - but I do not recommend it.

Perhaps oversensitive, I did not seek out the "substantial citizens" of Papeete or the foreigners whose incomes permit them to live there. There were exceptions: Alex Stergios' memorable Rainbow cocktails with Charles Nordhoff in casual meetings at the Yacht Club; delicious salad luncheons and pleasant conversations over rum punches in the apartment of that prince of ethnologists Dr. Peter Buck; a walk to Arué beach or Fautaua with the wife and daughter of Captain Bill - exiles like myself, waiting through the weeks for news of a craft that came to seem a phantom ship, a Flying Dutchman of the South - and meetings with a few other friends. But for the most part I shrank from accepting courtesies I could not return.

And there was an added complication - it rained! Now rain, at sea or on a coral island, is nothing. But in Papeete, where fashion decrees white clothes . . .

There are no sidewalks, or at best a few very narrow and sporadic ones along some shop fronts. The first day in Papeete, I sallied forth in the white suit brought along on the trip solely for state occasions when it might be necessary to call on officials. Rain catapulted down, spattering chunks of the street to my knees. A rain coat was no protection: it did not cover these most vulnerable parts, and after wearing it a few minutes in that steaming heat, I was as wet as from rain. One call was all I could make - then wait, in the ragged shorts or dungarees of shipboard use, for Matini's wife to beat the mud out of the whites, and the rain to cease long enough for her to dry them. Rain fell every day for weeks. As I have said, I had not contemplated more than a passing call in Tahiti.

This business of white clothes is quite serious. Even the school children one meets on the road look carefully to see what one is wearing before giving the salutation they have been taught: *"Bon jour, m'sieur!"* If a man is wearing white trousers, he's a *Popaa*. If not ...

There was no light for working aboard the *Tiare* at night only the feeble glimmer of the tiny cabin lamp and the glow of moon or stars on the deck. One could but sit alone, following the play of the night lights in the water, or move with the tide of Papeete citizenry that converges in the early evening to the little triangular park that looks out upon the waterfront; there to watch the flow of life that issues so astonishingly by night from the flower-hung inland streets a life full of the scent of gardenia and jasmine and soft voices, of guitar notes and singing, yet sad, tainted with a melancholy flavor of corruption and decay.

Here too, on the low stone benches, sat the exiles, the beachcombers, the fugitives and wanderers; the impoverished, the merely idle-careless young men, lured by elusive tropical charms to this backwater of decadence and disintegration; vain older ones, desperately, pathetically pursuing lost youth beneath the scented darkness. One by one they sat beside me, silent or garrulous, each with his gnawing worry, each with his sultry sorrow in his breast.

M----- was a Hollywood script writer, so he said, seeking quiet from a nervous breakdown, seeking peace that forever eluded him; nursing an acid hatred of his father who, he asserted, had poisoned his youth and continued to frustrate his maturity. He would sit by the hour talking of the curative power of faith and recounting the numerous physical ills he had overcome by it - and all the while tormented by some obscure maladjustment, some secret canker that no faith and no medicine could heal. He was always on the point of taking some decisive step:

"I'll leave tomorrow morning for a bicycle tour around the island, to get away from Papeete into the country, where there is peace. I'll sail by the next schooner for the Tuamotu and find some savage atoll where I can forget both Papeete and Hollywood."

But these resolves never came to any action. He would be there in the park the next evening, gazing moodily out across the water, fretting over his wrongs and paralyzed by an inertia that no effort of his sickened will could break.

Q------ had an unprofitable plantation on Raiatea, and he inveighed against the restrictions which made it almost impossible, he said, for a foreigner to do business. He was fond of discussing everything from the slump in copra to the world wide collapse of the economic system.

A young man sat down beside me to wait for a girl.

"Without a girl," he confided, "a fellow goes screwy in this place. . . . You're an American? So'm I. From New York, and my name's Scszwnsky. I've been in Chicago and Milwaukee; here about a year, on a plantation. Fed up with Tahiti. I want to go to the Tuamotu and live on fish and coconuts. I can fish as well as any native. That's a real life ....

"*Fefe*," he declared, "is caused by going up the mountain for bananas and then bathing in salt water."

My medical friends' opinion that the real cause of elephantiasis - from which foreigners, as well as natives, suffer in the damp districts - is a filaria transmitted by mosquitoes, did not impress him.

"They're all wet. All the natives say it's from getting over heated and then bathing in the sea."

"You're both wrong," said Karsten. "It's in the drinking water. Ever see a Chinaman with *fefe*? They don't drink water; only tea, and boil the water for that."

"They also sleep under mosquito nets," I reminded him.

Frank was one who liked Papeete. He picked strawberries in California each year until he had saved enough money for a few months in Tahiti. When the money was gone, he returned to California on his round trip ticket to pick more strawberries and earn another Tahitian visit.

Tom (which wasn't his name) went back and forth on some mysterious business, referred to only with tight-lipped evasion - possibly, we guessed, narcotic smuggling. Under his quiet, suave manner one could read, far back in his cold gray blue eyes, the hard ferocity of a gangster.

Karl, a scarred young Austrian war veteran, lived in the country and slept on Bob's ship when he came to town to do his marketing, bringing a different girl each Saturday night to his mat on the deck forward of the galley. She would greet me merrily and without a trace of embarrassment as she passed me on her way to the precarious gangplank in the dawn.

Joe appeared one evening with a very pretty girl, who pressed against him affectionately and finally suggested they go home.

"I've been living with her two years," he said, in English.

"At first she was extravagant and flighty, but now she's calmed down and behaves very well. They're all wrong when they say there's no love in these native girls."

Temoana has left Jerry," reported Fred. "It's a rare girl that stays with a man more than three days."

An elderly Dane in a sailor cap, whom I never heard called anything but "Ruau," that is, "Old Man," sat in the park every evening, surrounded by girls, who played upon his vanity or susceptibility and made sport of him in French and Tahitian among themselves.

A younger Dane, addressed by the girls as "Mama Po," was another waiter for a ship. He had, he said, operated a store in a Central American country; earthquake, fire and revolution had destroyed the business; he had shipped on a yacht and been left at the Marquesas; had managed to come as far as Papeete and had stowed away several times for American or European ports, but always had been discovered and shipped back.

He was subsisting frugally by repairing typewriters. Foreigners in Tahiti seldom obtain employment or are able to engage in business, but apparently he filled a need. It seemed he was the only typewriter repair man on the island.

His nickname had arisen from one of his misfortunes. In ill health and lacking money for hospital and medical care, he had consulted a Tahitian wise-woman who, aside from treating illnesses, also dealt, it was said, in love potions and other charms and spells. Her methods of therapy, as far as I could learn, consisted mainly of copious draughts of coconut water accompanied by incantations. This woman bore the appropriate name of Mama Po, literally Mother Night, and the name had been transferred, in jest, to her luckless "patient," the Dane.

"Could you make out the flag on the ship?" he inquired eagerly. "Is she a Danish ship?"

A long, rusty freighter had appeared off port in the late afternoon and was anchored in the darkness awaiting daylight to enter.

"If a Danish ship would come, I could get home."

Passing the coal dock next morning, I could see that she was indeed a Danish ship, come down from Makatea, that upraised coral island where phosphate is dug from the sharp clawed cliffs, where there is no harbor and ships moor to great steel buoys that plunge with the tossing seas.

"Mama Po" went aboard in high hope, and came away so cast down that I did not see him sober again for a week.

"It would have to be this ship, of all ships," he mourned. "My partner at Guadalupe Ruiz cheated them. He cheated me, too, but they blame me for it. Nothing I could say would convince them."

It wasn't so bad, I told him. After all, this ship was returning to Makatea and steaming thence to Australia; she would not go back to Denmark for two years. Meanwhile, another Danish ship was expected.

But Mama Po was a waif of misfortune. I have little doubt that he is still keeping the typewriters of Papeete oiled and adjusted, and sitting of evenings on a stone bench in the Place de la Mutualité, looking out to sea for some ship that may take him home.

All of them were discontented, in varying degree, without, I was convinced, being fully conscious of the underlying reasons for their discontent. Papeete is neither civilization nor the primitive, but near enough to both to aggravate maladjustments. They were critical mainly of local conditions and policies which hindered foreigners in doing business. Though I could sympathize with individual misfortunes, I could only reflect that there were too many foreigners and too much business already. But there it was: a triangle of mutual dislike and suspicion: French, non-French whites, and Chinese - and the aboriginals themselves carrying on their lives placidly, corrupted and enfeebled by the things that civilization had brought them, but, on the whole, less dispossessed than in some Polynesian lands.

So they would sit in the park, gossiping and comparing grievances, and chatting with the street-girls who passed in singing twos and threes, and watch the life that blossomed in the cool evening.

Bob and Ida, with flowers in their hair, would stroll down the unpaved

street, the young mother's sister leading their blond-haired son Coco; stopping at dimly lighted street - cares to chaffer with Chinese merchants for cakes or peeled oranges. With them might be their neighbors Carole and Miri, who would bait the Old Man, with derisive asides in Tahitian or French. A famous beauty was pointed out: a handsome young woman, but scarcely sufficiently so, I thought, to justify the legend.

"A young man in New York saw her picture "in a newspaper, and came to Tahiti to meet her. When he learned that she was registered with the police and carried a *carte de sanitation*, like the rest of the girls, he was broken-hearted...."

And went home, one story said; another, that he killed himself in despair.

A little Frenchman addressed as "Baldy" wandered from group to group of girls, meeting rebuffs - just why, nobody ever explained. A wild-haired, savage-looking woman whom they called "Ghost-girl," stalked dourly among us. She had a mania for stealing bicycles. She had even, they said, stolen one belonging to a gendarme. She had been deported to the Marquesas, but the Marquesas wouldn't have her, and here she was, back again, looking for more bicycles.

Simmons, the Negro pie-vendor, tapping his cane on the ground, discoursed weightily on world and local affairs, parried rallying queries as to his success in Chinese gambling games, and joked with the street-girls by whom, according to his own account, he was much sought.

"Don't let them overcharge you," he advised newcomers. "The standard rate is two francs, or five for all night."

The evening ends early in Tahiti. By nine o'clock or so the crowd would have thinned: householders, after taking the air in the park, to their homes and beds; the girls to their assignations or to the pool rooms and Tony's and Quin's; the beachcombers and tourists with them or following their own devices.

I would walk slowly through the dim street, past the little knots of girls and men, groups of red-topknotted sailors from the gunboat or soldiers from the militia barracks, toward Fareute. Tupu would appear mysteriously, like a dream ape conjured from the shadow of night, chattering in Tahitian and Tuamotuan and making tentative proposals to such unescorted girls as we passed or met, who never gave evidence of resentment.

It was peaceful on the deck of the cutter, with star or moonlight reflected from the water, ghostly shapes of schooners swinging at moorings left and right; and the night, fragrant with tropical flowers, covering the tawdry ugliness of the colonial town. Canoes passed, paddles splashing softly; women's voices sounded from them, in the island tongue. Bells of the churches counted the hours; lesser bells of the *Tiare Tahiti* and of the schooners, aboard which caretakers wound clocks and pumped bilges daily, tinkled their record of the passing night.

A huge truck drove up to Méré's door, between the head high walls of flower-starred hedges. Hostess and guests piled in, and we clattered singing - some dancing on the swaying floor of the vehicle - over the dusty road to Fautaua and the Bain de Loti.

That valley-cradled pool, where Loti had met his Rarahu in scenes of untroubled natural beauty, had changed in the three months and more since I had first visited it. Civilization had overtaken the green valley of Fautaua. Where a mountain stream had rippled over black lava boulders between banks deep in bush and fern, eddying in a small pool into which girls dived feet first from overhanging rocks - now a smooth concrete dam backed up the water between high lateral walls, from which steps led down to the augmented pool. Picnic tables stood beneath the trees; a line of rude dressing-rooms emitted a constant stream of bathers, and a policeman stood on guard, warning Sunday merrymakers that dancing was forbidden.

It is a civic improvement in which Papeete takes much pride. No doubt there is merit in thus enlarging the facilities of the pool so that more people can enjoy it at one time, rather than to keep it, for sentimental reasons, in its wild state; but what would Pierre Lori, whose sculptured features look down serenely on the scene, have thought of forbidding dancing!

We swam in the cool fresh water that sparkled clean and inviting in the sunlight, and afterward sat at the tables eating little cakes and drinking the good light wine of Tahiti, and singing - one may not dance at Loti's pool, but one may drink and sing.

Cassel and Delavan lived between Faaa and Punaauia, on a sand flat that looked almost like a low island as it curved into a shallow bay, its coconut palms leaning seaward over the tawny sand. They paid an insignificant rental for a tiny house, built partly of timber and partly of coconut fronds, and were living in the ideal way, for Tahiti - away from the town, near the sea, simply and as close to native style as is consistent with a white man's ideas of elementary comfort.

There was a sense of relaxation and peace in this seaside grove, after one had left the white dust of the Broom Road and corkscrewed down the uncertain path and wriggled through the barbed wire fences that barbarously enclosed an enveloping estate. From the house the traveled road was not visible - only sand and trees, quiet water from which fish leaped with a gurgling swish and plunged back with a plop; a rude outrigger canoe drawn up on the beach.

A bunch of yellow-ripe bananas hung on the fronded veranda, opposite a net of sweet Tahitian oranges. Rows of books, sketches of Hawaiian and Tahitian scenes from Delavan's brush, American Indian basketwork, a flaming Navajo blanket, told of the interests of these sojourners. From a carved chest came heavy barbaric ornaments in silver and turquoise, a Navajo craft that one of my hosts had learned and on which he partly subsisted.

Squatting like a native over a fire of husks in the grove, Delavan cooked - not indeed native food, but a pan of rice fried in the Chinese manner.

"We lived mostly on fish at first," he said. "But lately we've been a bit tired of it. We'll have to go back to it soon, though, if one of us doesn't sell something."

Outwardly the place looked, in its tidiness, much like a native home. But Cassel and Delavan couldn't live like natives. Few white men can. The white man's restless mind and body demand activity; he has not the native's sense of repose. So they had laid out, on the trodden sand, a miniature golf course, and set up a board with scoring numbers chalked on it, at which to throw little darts. Thus does the feverish emptiness of the "civilized" mind seek relief in futile occupations from the boredom of an idyllic and easeful life.

We all went to the mail boat to see Cassel off for California.

"I've got to get a job," he said.

In three months he was back in Tahiti, worn with futile job-seeking in the once-golden West, and glad to escape from the harassed atmosphere of a sick economic and political organism.

"It's useless," he reported. "Things going from bad to worse. The islands are the only hope. Here at least one can live on fish."

One goes up the road from the sea, across a wooden bridge over a small stream, and through an obscure entrance between two Chinese coffee-shops, along a lane that bears prints of bare feet in dust or mud - a narrow path between humble houses half buried in tropical vegetation. Banana leaves hang broadly in fragrant air. A gardenia tree showers white bloom on the breeze. Guitars strum; soft voices sing in French and Tahitian. Here dwell simple people, living their lives more or less as all of us live them, asking only to be let alone.

A high faded red gate opens on a narrow walk leading to a house far back. Up a dark stairway, one comes out on a balcony overlooking the green dooryard and the slow stream. This was the home of Skipper Bob, my host on the *Tiare Tahiti*.

Ida put down the guitar to greet me with quiet Rarotongan courtesy. The shy, quiet girl whom they called, from her place of origin, Tautira, smiled slowly and continued sewing. Slender, vivacious Yvette, smoothing black straight hair with quick nervous fingers, talked rapidly in English, French and Tahitian, her husky, muffled voice breaking occasionally into song.

She was, she confided, of mixed blood, Polynesian from one of the farther islands, and Chinese, but had been brought up by a Tahitian family.

"My mother gave me away when I was a baby, because I was so white and looked more Chinese than Polynesian. I am not strong; I did not have good care when I was little, and I was not suited to that life as the natives are.

"I like very much the Americans. My sweetheart was American, from Meeseeseepi. He said he would come back in three months, but he has not

come. Our baby was blond, like the baby of Bob and Ida, but he died.

"Now, I am finished with love. It is too hard for the heart. Sometimes I love; sometimes I hate. I am not like these Tahitians: when I love I love, and when I hate I hate!"

Yvette informed me that I looked like "Jean Barrymore," which doubtful compliment obviously was intended to bring out a statement of her own resemblance to some celebrity of the screen. As I did not rise to the bait at once, she asked me what cinema actress she looked like.

"Anna May Wong," I guessed, at a venture.

The fact was, Yvette fancied she looked like Dolores del Rio, and habitually arranged her hair and costume to heighten the supposed resemblance.

"Today is my birs'day," said Yvette. "You mus' *baiser la main*."

Singing a song of broad humor with an innocent refrain about "*les fraises et les framboises*," Yvette tripped away to renew her Dolores del Rio makeup. We overheard the old woman with whom she lived, grumbling in Tahitian:

"A no-good girl; she asks her men only to buy her clothes, and earrings, and ornaments for her hair, and eats our food, who have not enough for ourselves. Why doesn't she get food from the men?"

Yvette's voice rose a little higher in the irrelevant refrain of "the strawberries and the raspberries." Breaking off:

"An' w'en I love, I love; an' w'en I hate, I hate!"

The almost full moon was veiled with light cloud. Fareute and the schooners reflected in it were silvered with ghostly light. Mist hid Moorea; lights were bright along the Pare shore, and there was singing and laughter in the streets. I awoke, as the ship's clock chimed six bells, to hear guitars and singing near at hand. Here were Bob and Harry and Frank, with three girls and a guitar. Tupu came, grinning bashfully, from his lair below, where he had taken refuge from the unaccustomed chill of Papeete nights, and we danced in the Tepuka manner on the moon-bathed deck, to the huge amusement of the visitors. Tetua, a brown, smiling young woman with a great walrus-tooth bracelet curved round her plump arm, danced opposite us, Tahitian fashion, with verve and abandon.

The guests left about midnight, and I returned to my mat, only to be awakened by angry voices and the thud and crash of breaking crockery from the house at the shore end of our gangplank where a shipbuilder lived with three young and pretty women, all sisters, whom I had seen often swimming in the harbor alongside or sunning their hair, singing "*Aime moi, comme on aime une rose*" in low, pleasant voices. The moon at four o'clock was so bright that sleep was impossible, but it was worth a few more hours awake to see the sun rising and the moon setting over the harbor at the same time.

Two girls sat down beside me, in the Place de la Mutualité, and began talking, as people do the world over, about the weather.

"Who is your sweetheart?" inquired at length the plump one in red.

"I have no sweetheart in this country."

"Why not?" she inquired, simply.

How explain to these children of nature the conventions of the white men's civilization, which are so frequently ignored by the white men with whom they have come in contact? A few attempts convinced me that it was futile.

"*Aita moni*," I finally replied, to end the conversation with an answer as simple as the question. "No money" - here at last was something they could understand.

So I came to know those waifs of the unequal struggle between civilization and the primitive - the street-girls of Papeete. As they grew accustomed to see me in the park, and to chat with me in my halting Tuamotuan-Tahinan and in scraps of English that some of them knew, we became acquainted sufficiently so that they told me something of their life. Here was one who was neither a customer nor a potential exploiter; in some sense an exile, as were most of themselves, stranded and existing precariously in the city by the sea. Something of an enigma to them, too - a *Popaa* who had "no money," although all *Popaa* are fabulously rich, and who spoke in Tuamotuan, which they had been brought up to consider the barbarous dialect of a race of cannibals. So I became to them *te Popaa Paumotu* - the Tuamotu White Man.

They would sit on the benches, gaily gossiping and making gentle, if broad, jests; would give me fragrant sprays of gardenia or jasmine and offer to share with me their small treats of oranges, young coconuts and carefully divided little cakes. One, jestingly voicing a suspicion that my "poverty" was a more immediate one than that of money, handed me half of a hard-boiled egg bought from the ubiquitous Chinese wagon peddler.

"Eat!" she commanded. "It will make you strong!"

When I contributed a bottle of the light, white wine that is so good in Papeete, and so cheap, confidence was firmly established.

Scarcely one of them was a native of Papeete; few of them even of the island of Tahiti. They came from the country districts, from neighboring islands, a few even from Rapa, Rurutu, Mangareva, one or two from the western Tuamotu. Most of them had, however, relatives in the city, poor like themselves. There was no employment, even if they had wanted to work or had known how. So they had drifted into that occupation, so casually and desultorily conducted in Papeete, which seems to be accepted there less critically than in America.

Even so, it was a puzzle how they lived. When a liner was in port - once a month each way - the girls, like their relatives the stevedores, were busy; in the weeks between, they apparently had little to do, unless taken to live with one or another of the unattached tourists who spend a month or so, between boats, on the island.

"Two francs," Simmons had said, "and five for all night" - at the then

current exchange, thirteen cents and thirty-three, a pitiful wage for youth and sometimes beauty. The girls said, however, that there were no fixed rates, though these might represent a minimum. Men gave what they would, according to individual generosity. It was to some extent a survival of the old Polynesian custom of exchange of gifts. A girl got what she could - a dress, a pair of earrings, a bracelet, a few francs for food.

Between boats, they lived on relatives when they could, and on the proceeds of brief liaisons with residents or visitors.

Tetua, the dancer of the moonlit deck, said she rarely had affairs at these times.

"If a boat comes," she said, "all right .... "

One called The Quietness was one of the unloveliest of feature, if one of the kindest-hearted, Polynesians I had seen. Her broad, pockmarked face grew out of a shapeless body, and her breath tainted the flower-laden evening with the odor of decayed teeth. I made discreet inquiries to determine how this female Caliban met the formidable competition of her handsomer associates. It appeared that she, for one, had a job.

"I take care of the children of a French family," she explained. "I have stayed with many men in my lifetime, but it's too much trouble!"

Some lived permanently with relatives, but most of them had rooms in those flowering lanes that dive inland from behind the Chinese coffee-shops; lanes of little houses with faded paint peeling from walls and crumbling, termite-eaten steps sloping dangerously from narrow broken-down verandas; each house with its cement-floored outdoor washroom, where the mountain water so abundant in Tahiti makes a musical sound as it drips night and day from leaking pipes.

Not only they live there. It is no segregated district. In those lanes, men in faded dungarees and women in bright cotton dresses sit on crazy steps in gathering darkness and smoke; someone plays a guitar and sings, a little out of tune. It is a mournful song, about the sea and going away, and being "lost in the foaming sea" a farewell song.

A group of men drinking wine in the street press passersby to drink with them. A child wails in one of the poor but somehow scarcely squalid houses; farther down the lane the melancholy singing drifts on:

> "This is the road my body goes:
> lost in the foaming sea.
> Alas! alas indeed!
> Beneath the burning heat of day
> I will remember you,
> Tahiti, pearl of the sea!"

There was no organized system, and no evidence of male "protectors," though the girls pointed out a foreigner who, they said, sometimes arranged matters for woman-hungry tourists. But there was government regulation.

Every girl who is not living with parents or responsible relatives, nor regularly employed, is required, they said, regardless of her morals or lack of them, to carry the *carte de sanitation* and submit to weekly examination. We used to see them coming from the station Saturday mornings, happy that their record was good, assured of another week's freedom. Those whose examination failed to show health, did not return. They were kept in detention for treatment.

Taui was from Raiatea - a small, sunny-spirited girl of seventeen, who displayed with pride a card showing a perfect record of health week by week from the beginning a year or more before, and who chattered about her life without a trace of embarrassment. She had lived with an Australian, whose picture she showed with evident pride, kissing it fondly, and folded in with her police card she carried some of his letters, extracts from which she read aloud. Her mother, she said, had approved of him, because he was "a good man" - meaning, no doubt, a generous one.

"He funny man," she commented. "He like to love me all the time; my goo'ness!"

Taui and Miriama-Tetua were in love, for the time, with two sailors of a ship in port, to whom they would bring pitiful little gifts of mangoes and oranges, and heavy-scented wreaths of Tahitian gardenias. Miriama-Tetua was tall and light-olive-skinned, with a sad smile, a gentle seriousness of demeanor, and a repertoire of songs in Tahitian and badly garbled French. When a barnacle gashed my foot as I climbed upon the pier from a swim in the harbor, it was Miriarna-Tetua who pressed and bathed the wound to squeeze out and wash away any poison.

Rinia was dark and savage of countenance, with a lively taste for wine white or red, and, when she could get it, for "rhum punch." She always appeared with a big-eyed, noisy, yodeling singer who she said was her sister, and Rosa, whose features betrayed a Latin origin. The three, in shorts and improvised brassieres of strips of pareu cloth, swam daily in the harbor, diving with whoops of merriment from a buoy beyond Fareute, and at night would sing, on the decks of ships at dock, newly devised Tahitian versions - usually unquotable without expurgation - of the latest Hawaiian songs to reach Papeete in recordings.

The song heard oftenest in Papeete at that time, however, was set to a familiar hymn tune, but with a text secularized out of all resemblance to the version known to my Sunday School days. The Tahitians had liked the tune so well they had made a love-song of it.

How shall one find the mean between literal and free translation of these frank *himene*?

"Come to me, my dear one," was its thought; "for here I am, to meet you in the night. When will you come to me? The moon has risen above our bed, to drive away our trouble. Alas, alas, the sorrow of this love!"

It was a favorite selection of the orchestra in Papeete's one cinema theater.

I recall its once-sacred cadence being played through a Wild West film, to be broken off abruptly as the preview of the next Sunday's feature - a religious subject was flashed on the dingy screen; whereupon the orchestra struck up brightly: "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight!"

Erena, the most interesting character of them all, was a Tuamotuan from the island of Fakarava. She was tall and very slender, with great glowing dark eyes and a bush of stiff night-black hair above drawn features not without remnants of a wild beauty. We would talk in Tuamotuan, which she seemed glad to hear, and she would sing in her low, husky voice, in which there was a note of doomed sadness. Looking at her, I knew that Erena had not many more nights of song and laughter under the stars. She was bleeding away inwardly with tuberculosis; already she breathed twelve times to the normal once of any of us; the broken lungs could barely sustain life. With a feverish gaiety against the somber back ground of impending death, she glowed fitfully in the tropic night - a Mimi of a South Seas "Bohème."

I thought of Rarahu's letter to Loti: "Alas, the arum flower that was once so pretty: alas, the flower is faded. . . ."

"Taui and Miriama wept last night," she was saying, in her hoarse Tuamotuan, "because their lovers are going away. I told them, 'You are silly to weep. Tomorrow another ship will come.' "

There spoke the philosophy of islands that know so many partings, so many lovers who sail away to return no more, but islands to which always must come "another ship."

"Go back to the Tuamotu," I urged her, remembering the recovery of Pakiuma at Tepuka from a similar illness a few years before. "The dry air of the coral islands will heal your lungs."

"By the next sailing of the *Vaite*," she promised, "I will go to my uncle at Fakarava."

But Erena was not to see again the low palm-crowned shore of Fakarava or its iron-roofed houses gleaming under the sun. Within a few weeks after our departure, in a little port in the Isles Under the Wind, Wili the Rapa boy, on an inter-island schooner that lay alongside us, brought the news:

"*Aue!* the poor Erena - dead!"

The arum flower had withered.

Miriama-Tetua leaned over the guitar in her lap, and a tear splashed on my hand where I sat on the deck below her place on the low rail.

"I shall turn in my card when Tom goes," she said, in Tahitian, "and live with my relatives, to wait till he comes back."

Her hand struck a clanging chord; she lifted her sad dark head and sang the song that, more than any other, typifies the spirit of the Papeete waterfront:

> "Love me, as one loves a rose
> a sun-ray quickens to its brief unclosing;

love me, as the jasmine grows,
pouring its fragrance to the night's reposing.
Pluck me, I am your rose, your flower,
that blooms but for this little transient hour:
Pluck me, your flower, for this night's joy to be -
soon the flower closes, for your heart and me."

Rinia bent over me as she stepped away with a tall blond sailor.

"Let me stay with you," she whispered quickly in Tahitian. "I don't care for this man; you are my friend, a friend to us all, a good man."

I replied in the conventional idiom, which might be translated, "Run along; I'm staying here."

As she turned to accompany the sailor, Rinia bent again and sank strong teeth savagely into my shoulder.

"I could kaikai you!" she said fiercely in beach-English, and disappeared.

Porina held herself a little aloof from the others, conveying an obscure sense of mystery. She was warm earth-brown and generously curved, with wavy dark hair and luminous Polynesian eyes, and an engaging full-lipped smile. Her favorite song was "The Jasmine-Flower"another lament of ships that sail away, leaving only "the dream within my heart."

Porina was not a professional, if a line may be drawn between professional and amateur in that land of blurred distinctions. She was a housekeeper or maid in the home of an official's family, yet apparently not averse to an occasional adventure. Rivalry had developed between a first mate and a cadet making his first voyage, for the affections of this somewhat reserved beauty, and it was evident that she was enjoying the situation.

"I'll give you twenty-five francs to get Jim drunk tonight," the young sailor offered his friends. As the first mate seldom drank, this scheme never came to anything. Then a tattered native came aboard with a pocketful of small pearls, which he offered for ten francs each. They may have been synthetic pearls manufactured in Japan or Europe and "planted" in some lagoon to be hauled out for gullible tourists, but they looked all right. Eddy bought three, and was seen in earnest conversation with Porina on the forward hatch. As she mounted her bicycle and rode away, he confided:

"I couldn't get her to break her date with Jim entirely, but she promised to send him home at eight o'clock."

And so she did, for the mate ambled dourly aboard shortly after that hour and retired to his quarters without a word, while young Eddy, they said, was missing from the ship all that night.

That girl is no good," insisted Wili, who knew all the port gossip. "She has a child by a Chinaman, and just now her native lover is sick in the hospital, and the police have taken away her card."

"That's all nonsense," protested Eddy. "They're jealous because she's better than they are."

Porina herself seemed honest enough about it.

"It is true I have had a child by the *Tinito*. I told Eddy it was my sister's child, because he is a stranger to this country and wouldn't understand. Before I got the job at the officer's house, I had no way to buy food or clothes, and I lived with the Chinaman. What was wrong in that?

"As for my native lover, he caught the illness in Mangareva, on his last voyage. I haven't had anything to do with him since."

"She's different," the first mate maintained, spitting over the rail into the harbor as we watched a Tahitian diver go down for incredibly long periods to salvage lumps of coal.

And indeed Porina preserved to the end an aura of distinction. Perhaps it was because she avoided the sometimes rough manners, bold approaches and the more boisterous songs of her ruder companions. She was gracious, but a bit withdrawn, and always that wide rich smile and warm full voice flowed down the singing nights.

So passed evenings outwardly gay with laughter and wine and song, but tinged always with that underlying sadness that flowers darkly in all tropic lands. Around them the deep rose of night unfolded vast purple petals. And in the eternal sky that had seen the fading of so many arum flowers, so many partings - far, high, above all laughter and all tears, glittered and wheeled the cold indifferent stars.

The northbound "Mail" ship came in, making a rare busy day in Papeete. Men hurried to answer a month's accumulation of letters that had arrived on the southbound boat one working day earlier. Girls of the town strolled in pairs or threes up and down the wharf or climbed furtively or boldly aboard. Citizens and visitors alike watched the unwonted activity.

A few tourists disembarked; there were a few leis. The young American who acts as chauffeur, adviser, guide and arranger of entertainment was busy with his huge second hand car-full of sightseers.

But there was an undertone of something unusual about the waterfront ... men gathering in groups and talking in low tones; somebody shouting out something unintelligible in Tahitian and bad French; an unaccustomed tensity in the air.

"There may be a fight tonight," Manu reported witch evident glee. "The agent has fired all the regular stevedores, who got four francs a day, and hired younger men at three francs. He thinks that's a smart trick: the younger men can work faster and get less pay."

It was disquieting, this intrusion of economic struggle into the peaceful island world where by all tradition and fiction it could not exist. The Mail boats call once a month in either direction; the Messageries Maritimes less often, and a few freighters make port between. Four francs was less than thirty cents in American money; even in Tahitian purchasing power it was less than a dollar. Now this pitiful wage had been cut to twenty cents, or the equivalent

of about sixty cents' worth of food, clothing and shelter.

But even in labor disputes, the Polynesian mind works somewhat differently from the European. Resentment centered not so much against the reduction in pay as against the dismissal of the veteran stevedores.

All my waterfront acquaintances, save Porina's luckless suitor Jim, sympathized with the aggrieved laborers. The street girls inveighed in rapid French and Tahitian and stumbling English against the injustice of the agent; park loiterers abetted them or looked on in cynical amusement. Knots of men gathered in shadows or in pale pools of light as night deepened over the Quai de Commerce - but, as often is the case in those countries, though there was much talk and gesticulation, nothing happened.

"We won't go aboard that ship," Tera'i announced.

Apparently the street-girls had called a sympathetic strike!

Next morning the ship was to sail. Wreathed tourists climbed the inclined plank; homegoing beachcombers withdrew lingeringly or hurriedly from the embraces of flower crowned weeping girls; agents, ship's officers, gendarmes and port dignitaries strutted importantly to and fro.

And again nothing happened. The hour for sailing passed; the next hour, and the next. Passengers tripped back down the plank; the crowd scattered slowly as the heat of noon closed in.

"The engine room is on strike," Wili reported. "They won't move the ship until the old stevedores have been hired back at the old rate and have unloaded all the cargo and loaded it again."

The night was noisy with banging of empty oil drums, clatter of voices, creaking of winches, as cargo was lowered and rolled and dumped on the wharf and back into the hold.

The strike had won. Solidarity of labor had shown essential humanity: the "black gang" of white men in the engine room had rescued the brown men of the wharf from an attempt to encroach upon their meager livelihood.

"They ought to all be lined up and shot," was the reaction of Jim, the mate.

"A typical white folks' philosophy," I retorted, "that guns are the answer to all things. It is that philosophy that will destroy the white man's civilization."

With leis and tears and soft calls of "Life to you! Come back!" the ship sailed, and Papeete sank back into its tropical apathy for another month.

"Your ship will be here any day now," said Mama Po, as he said every night. "Look! Isn't that a ship's running-light out there at the harbor entrance now?"

It was only a star, appearing to move as clouds flowed past. I made my way down the long waterfront street and through the shipyards where the dogs now knew me and refrained from rending the night with savage growls, to where the *Tiare Tahiti* swayed at her moorings in the dark water, and lay on the mat on the cabin roof as I had done so many nights in this weary enchantment of waiting.

As I drifted to sleep, to the gurgle of water and creak of lines and plank, a sound aroused me. Had I been dreaming? No, there it was again, the *Islander's* whistle, followed by the rapid shuffling sound of her engine. I had fallen asleep too many tumes to that sound, in the fo'c'sle of that ship, to mistake it.

As I reached the wharf, Alec and Enoka were tying her up. It was a battered-looking ship and crew, bearing the scars of four months' voyaging since I had last seen them, in the seas where so many ships that summer had been lost.

"It is dirty, that ship!" commented the little monkey-faced West Indian from Martinique - for the girls had already gathered to look over the new arrivals.

Indeed, the sampan looked none too tidy: her cabin roof piled high with old gear and moldering provisions; her paint scarred and faded and worn away; the iron wrenched off her bow and the great cross-timber over which the anchor is hauled broken off short with the buffeting of seas; the drying house, aft, scorched with fire. Her crew was almost as scarred and soiled: bulging bandages and splotches of poison-pink mercurochrome and fever-red permanganate marked the wounds, boils and sores of months at sea and many an encounter with lava or coral; legs limped; beards spread over familiar Honolulu faces the aspect of the tropical jungles through which they had fought; clothes were in even more tattered shreds than mine, and my shipmates were devoured by every kind of vermin known to the southern isles.

"Welcome aboard: we have fleas from Rapa, lice from Rurutu and bedbugs from Mangareva. Ray has boils; Mac is full of coral cuts; Tané's sores are worse than ever; Kahiu has the same running nose he had when we left Papeete. The skipper has eczema in his throat; Dr. Cooke got his leg caught between the boat and a landing; Ernest has a finger as big as two thumbs.

"We almost lost the ship three times: caught in the tide rip in the lagoon of Hao; stood on end in storm between Pitcairn and Henderson; on fire at Rapa.

"But we're here ... *la ora na! Aloha! Wela ka hao!*"

She looked good to me, that long, low, sharp-nosed, flat bottomed, reeling craft and her hard, sun-darkened company. No more *maa Tinito*, no more wondering whether the last few francs would hold out until my ship arrived. No more anxiety lest they all had been lost on some fanged reef or sunk in the lonely spaces of the South Pacific.

"Beer! Beer! Beer!" chanted my refound shipmates, after the round of backslapping and handshakes. We trooped, a ruffian horde of tatterdemalions, across the street to Bohler's bar. From the waterfront came the strum of guitars and the sound of gold-brown voices singing:

> "This is the road my body goes,
> lost in the foaming sea. . . . "

The *Tiare Tahiti* was off to the Tuamotu again to join Keneti and Te Rangi Hiroa - for the latter, growing impatient with the slow progress of repairs on the cutter, had sailed by a copra schooner.

Boarding her for the last time, I looked again at the ship that had been my home in these lonely days and nights, and the last link with the Tuamotu. Her keel had parted those waters; the bare brown feet of my friends had trodden her decks. I scattered on the harbor the last gray and white plumes of the feather wreath little Maroma had given me, and another bit of my island floated away with the morning tide.

The *Tiare* sailed out through the pass, the last sight of her the flag fluttering from her stern; I thought how Paunu and his people had stood thus and watched us out of sight, waving bravely in the noon sunlight.

We were saying good-by to Tahiti the next day, too. Here was another period in the strange mysterious flow of time and human life. The decks had been scrubbed the hull repainted and repaired; the festering Tané banished; the fo'c'sle purged of its insect life with cyanide. New lands again were before us under the notched horizon of the sea, and after them - home! For us now the parting songs:

> "This is the road my body goes ..
> Beneath the burning heat of day
> I will remember you,
> Tahiti, pearl of the sea!"

And so we sailed, eager for home, yet with an aching consciousness of the approaching end of peace. We were coming back to shoes, underwear and the battering of pavements; to definite times and seasons; to occupations involved with the manipulation of intangibles; to the caprices of those who wield power of life and death by the giving or withholding of employment. Coming back also to fresh milk, ice cream, cold beer - or to the lack, amid plenty, of these things - back to home and dear ones and to all the intricate mesh of blessings and curses, of conveniences and burdens, that our race has woven for itself. Back to the pavements-but none of us, perhaps, wholly back; something of us would remain on the straight clean sea roads and among the straight clean roads of primitive minds; the feel of coral reefs and of high untrampled places would not wholly leave our feet, nor our eyes forget the look of wide waters and of red-fringed coral islands in the dawn.

A letter comes. It has been months on the way. It is written, by a kind and considerate hand, in the simplest Tuamotuan phrases, adapted to the limited understanding of the foreigner:

"Life to you! I, Maono Maetiu Arai, chief of Tepuka and Tepoto, greet you. There is no news at Tepuka Maruia. We are all well. It is being done according to your thought: the children are learning the ancient dances. We see well that this is a good work.

"Great is our regard for you two. This is my desire: that you send me pictures of yourselves and of your wives and your children, that we may look upon your faces though you are far away.

"This also is my desire: that you two come again co Tepuka Maruia, and bring me a phonograph and some records, and a fishline and some hooks, a pair of strong trousers and a glass-bottom box for fishing; a flashlight and some batteries, and many pictures.

"This is the desire of all of us, that you two come back to Tepuka Maruia. For the love of all of us for you two is great.

"Life to you two, and to your wives and children.

"Written at Tepuka Maruia by Maono Maetiu Arai."

Two years - and there is no news at Tepuka Maruia. What a place for a newspaper man to rest!

tirara te parau

APPENDIX I

That Celebrated Lure

I HAVE OFTEN BEEN ASKED more in detail about our life on the more remote islands, and sometimes what preparations one should make who wants to go there.

In the first place, I do not advise anybody to go. People accustomed to the convenience, sanitation and ease of communication of civilized life can have no idea of the difficulties and hazards that such an undertaking involves. Emory is probably right in saying that in descriptions of the islands, which have dwelt on their pleasant and picturesque features, I have painted too attractive a picture. And except for an interest in the study of native life and culture, there is little to draw anybody to visit them.

It may therefore be well to note here the difficulties.

First, the difficulty of getting there and of getting away again: this was solved for us by our connection with the Bishop Museum expedition, which had its own boats. Even so, it was found impossible to adhere to schedule. The *Tiare Tahiti* was nearly two months late in picking us up for return to Tahiti, and the *Islander* was three months longer in making the entire expedition than had been contemplated. Without such transportation, one would have to depend on copra schooners and native cutters, which make irregular and infrequent calls at the various islands.

One must, furthermore, obtain permission from the government authorities at Papeete to visit the outlying islands, and in this we were greatly aided by the influence of the Museum. Authorities there, as elsewhere, are likely to be suspicious of strangers who want to go to unusual places or do unusual things. We had a plausible reason, and the name of the Museum smoothed the way. We even had a letter from the governor, enjoining all district chiefs and other officers to help us in every way possible, in the interest of science. The circumstance that this letter was written in French, which few Tuamotuans can read, was not as serious a disadvantage as it might seem. The official seals were impressive enough.

There is the language difficulty. Few Tuamotuans speak any European language, and the Polynesian language is virtually unknown in the United States outside the Territory of Hawaii. We were fortunate in this respect, for Emory already spoke Tahitian, and I had a useful, though slight, acquaintance with Hawaiian. Using as a basis a small Hawaiian vocabulary and some knowledge of the structure of the Polynesian language, obtained from thirteen years' residence in the islands, I was able, with the help of Emory and the

natives, to acquire a vocabulary - amounting before I left to about one thousand words - which enabled me to converse to some extent with those who spoke simply and plainly and who were sufficiently patient with a foreigner's halting efforts to speak their language. With out this, life in the Tuamotu would have been lonely, and our difficulties would have been almost insurmountable.

There is the problem of subsistence. Romantic tales of Polynesian hospitality are founded largely upon mistaken notions of Polynesian exchange of gifts. Nowadays, at least, the Tuamotuan, through contact with traders, has become a shrewd bargainer, and I have a notion that even in more primitive times he expected something in exchange for what he gave. These are a poor people, living a hard and hazardous life, and they can not afford to support strangers indefinitely.

We had, therefore, our own supplies: cases of tinned food, bags of potatoes, yams, etc., from Tahiti, and everything whose vital need we could foresee. These supplies were supplemented to some extent by local food, for gifts of which we were careful to make adequate return.

We had a small gasoline stove, to save the time and trouble of cooking in native fashion, and an assortment of kitchen utensils and dishes. Emory even had a gasoline lamp, which functioned but a night or two before its mechanism failed, leaving us to depend on my kerosene lantern and a sparse afterthought supply of candles.

Our life on the island was thus a compromise between native life and civilization - a primitive sort of camping. Contrary to native custom, we cooked and ate in the house. We slept, however, on mats, but with blankets for covering. For drinking water we depended largely on the natives' gifts of young coconuts, though we had a few cases of canned pineapple juice for emergencies, as drinking water on low islands may be scarce or unwholesome. At Tatakoto, for instance, the well water is believed to cause eruptions on the skin. Tepuka has a fairly good water supply, which we used in cooking and in washing dishes, and for bathing - the latter rite performed in our landlord's bathing enclosure or, at night, in the dooryard, with a small pan of water.

Writing materials, such tools as we might need, and all such oddments as needles and thread had to be brought with us. They are scarce in the islands.

Some food supplies could have been bought at the Chinese store, but they are scanty and irregular, and the prices high. And we could not take time from our studies for daily fishing, which is the natives' main subsistence, even had we had their skill. A native man spends the greater share of his day in that occupation.

Foreigners are prohibited from trading with natives, except, in case of necessity, for food. The principle of exchange of gifts, however, is recognized, and in our case at least no objection was made to our carrying a modest supply of ten-cent store scented soap, bandanna handkerchiefs, cheap

jewelry, pocket-knives, and the like; marbles and hard candy for the children, and even a few very small bottles of perfumery, though we learned later that this article is forbidden in the islands because of its alcoholic content.

We could have increased our popularity greatly if we had had extra supplies of rough clothing to give our friends, who were particularly envious of our strong dungarees and palaka jackets from Honolulu. The easy Honolulu work-shoes, with soft tops and automobile-tire soles, would also have been popular if we had had any large enough.

Money, too, contrary to romantic notions, is necessary in the South Seas of today. Natives will barter, but they know the uses of the Bank of Indo-China note and more particularly of the bronze Papeete Chamber of Commerce tokens that pass for "small change." It is well to carry a fairly large supply of that base coinage, for there are places where it is almost impossible to get a paper note changed.

A medical kit is necessary, and particularly a plentiful supply of alcohol, which is the only remedy, I was told, for "salt water sores" which are prevalent in those seas. The principal danger is from infections, which thrive in tropical countries. Every cut or scratch should be washed at once with alcohol, and watched for signs of poisoning. It was a combination of care, luck, strong constitutions and conditioning through years of life in Hawaii that enabled us to escape as far as we did; and even so, both Emory and I suffered once from infection in my case, a highly dangerous one. More serious mishaps acute appendicitis, or a broken bone, such as one might easily get while trying to land on an unprotected reef - would be impossible to treat. That is just one of the hazards.

We were prepared against elephantiasis by being supplied with mosquito nets - which, however, we did not use because nobody on the island was afflicted with that disfiguring form of filariasis. I afterward saw plenty of it in the high islands, but as we usually slept aboard the ship, well off shore, the nets did not come into use even then.

We were fortunate that Tepuka and Tepoto were free from serious diseases, for the conditions of life there are such as to guarantee the spread of any that once got a foothold. Habits are extremely gregarious, and sanitary arrangements do not exist. Living in the community, conditions being what they were, we should have been exposed constantly to whatever germs might have existed.

There are minor annoyances. For instance, practically all the children, and some of their elders, have head-lice. As the children particularly crowded around us at all times, it is surprising that we never acquired these pests. There are fewer mosquitoes at these islands than in some others we visited, but innumerable flies, with the usual filthy habits of their kind. I never became accustomed to their crawling on my face when I tried to sleep in the afternoon.

Then, too, it is somewhat wearing to be under constant observation, like

an exhibit in a human zoo. That is one of the disadvantages of a sojourn in a country where white people are so rare as to be objects of curiosity. One becomes accustomed to it, but it remains something of a strain.

So does the necessity for concentrated attention in conversation, to pick up every available word that is recognizable, so as to seize the meaning of the context, And likewise the converse: the effort to communicate even the simplest things, and more so, to shape thoughts foreign to the native mind into expressions intelligible to that mind. For the white man and the *maohi* remain to some extent a mutual mystery to each other. There is constant necessity for care in avoiding offense through unwittingly violating local custom. We were somewhat prepared for this by a knowledge of Polynesian customs in general, but the reader of the foregoing pages knows that we were not always successful in avoiding embarrassment.

Some cautions commonly given to travelers in tropical climates we found less necessary than had been expected. For instance, the near-equatorial sun proved less murderous than it is said to be. Though out of respect to insistent warnings we both wore hats for the first time in years, I spent many hours under the full sun in or on the lagoon, bareheaded and with no clothing but a scanty pair of bathing trunks, without even acquiring a deep tan. The glare of coral islands is said to be hard on the eyes, and I heard of persons whose sight had been seriously affected by it. Both of us were provided with black glasses, which we discarded after the first few days; however, both of us had been exposed for years to the sun in Hawaii, and I wore lightly tinted lenses throughout the expedition.

The light differs, in some way I do not understand, from light elsewhere, and the difference is likely to interfere with photography. One can't go by the rules, but has to work out, by sad experience, one's own schedule of shutter-openings and exposures. Films spoil in tropical climates; Emory developed his miniature negatives in a small portable tank, at night, under the most primitive conditions, and obtained fair results; my larger kodak negatives were preserved in a tight can, with a matchbox filled with anhydrous salt, until I returned to Tahiti, where I learned that lack of adjustment to the light conditions, and mechanical imperfections in the kodak under the stress of sea wind and island dust, had ruined most of the pictures.

The authorities inspect closely every camera, typewriter or similar piece of equipment brought into the country, as there is a high tariff on these things. In our case, the influence of the Museum facilitated our entry, but we still had to account to the port officers, on leaving, for every camera, typewriter and roll of film we had brought in.

Specimens of native arts and crafts are also subject to inspection, as there seems to be some regulation against taking the more rare and genuine articles out of the country. This difficulty was also adjusted by the Museum, in the interest of science.

An item of equipment that inexperienced persons would be likely to

neglect is an assortment of "parlor tricks" with which to entertain and gain the confidence of the natives. Emory's guitar was a great advantage in this respect, and my small repertoire of Hawaiian songs enabled me to make my way. For the natives crave entertainment, and a visitor who cannot contribute his share to an evening's *arearea* is deemed a dull fellow. Hawaiian dancing, and some simple acrobatic or juggling feats, would be valuable accomplishments.

A visitor should also have a liberal collection of pictures, including views of his home and portraits of members of his family. Emory's album of this nature was a universal favorite on the island. For Polynesians, with their emphasis on genealogy, take a keen interest in one's family relations, and ask all manner of questions: What is your wife's name? How old is she? How many children have you, and what are their names and ages? Is your marriage "completed"? (i.e., solemnized by a ceremony). Are your parents living, and what are their names and ages? How many brothers and sisters? and so on.

A collection of illustrated magazines also proved a great attraction. A man on one of the more prosperous islands, questioning Emory as to how these had been obtained, was surprised to learn that for fifty or seventy-five francs it was possible to have a magazine sent to him for a year; having recently received some money for copra, he announced his intention of subscribing to the publication in question, though he could not read a word of its text. Geographical views proved the most fascinating to these people, and they never tired of turning over the pages and asking questions about this or that illustration.

Emory's portable phonograph, with a collection of Hawaiian records, enormously increased our popularity, and had a further use in keeping the young people occupied while he questioned a few of the better-informed elders, comparatively free from interruption. Classical and jazz numbers were not favored; nor were the slow tempo Hawaiian tunes; to be entertaining to these people, the music must be fast and spirited, with text that they can, at least in part, comprehend. Fast hula tunes with Hawaiian words were our most popular selections.

One really should make one trip to find out how to proceed; then come back again over the same ground to make use of that knowledge.

Most supplies, particularly food, can be obtained in Papeete, and it is an advantage to do so, even though some things cost more to avoid the restrictions on bringing in foreign articles. If one bought, so far as possible, local or French goods, one might even, in times of favorable monetary exchange, get off cheaper by doing so.

I have been asked whether it would be possible for one weary of civilization to retire to such a country. The answer is that it would be possible, though difficult, and that if one did so, he probably would not remain contented there indefinitely. Unless one is able to enjoy native art expression to an extent to compensate him for what he is giving up, the restricted scope of life on a coral island or even a high island would become in time

oppressive.

Still, it has been done, though most people who have done it enjoy it only so long as they are able to get away when they want to. Exceptional characters, who appreciate native life and culture and are able to enter into it, might find it satisfying.

The material difficulties are somewhat formidable. In most islands, land is unobtainable, though by marriage or adoption one might obtain the use of it. In time perhaps one could acquire the native art of fishing. There is a tax on foreigners, collected for the first year after sixty days' residence, and payable at Papeete. For the first year, this amounts to five hundred francs; thereafter it is smaller.

There is an American couple at Rapa who, after a hard struggle, are maintaining themselves by agriculture. An American at Mangareva subsists in the same way, though he has long since given up any intensive application to industry, because the relatives of his native wife consume any surplus. I know of none in the Tuamotu. There are several in the Society Islands, some of whom do fairly well in ranching, and others who have retired on small incomes which go farther there than in their own countries. At the time of our visit, an American dollar was worth, in purchasing power, about three dollars in Tahiti.

And yet, for the exceptional person who is prepared to appreciate it, there is peace in some of those countries.

APPENDIX II

For Those Who Crave Facts

Readers interested in the ethnological study of Tuamotuan life will find an authoritative and comprehensive account in a forthcoming scientific publication prepared by Kenneth P. Emory of the Bishop Museum staff, to be published by the Museum.

THE TUAMOTU:

THE TUAMOTU ARCHIPELAGO, formerly called Paumotu and still so called by most natives, comprises about eighty low coral islands, extending more than six hundred miles from northwest to southeast, between the Society Islands on the west, the Marquesas on the north, and the Mangareva or Gambier Islands on the south. About half of them are inhabited by, it is estimated, a total of perhaps five thousand people. The natives are of the Polynesian race, as are those of the surrounding high or volcanic islands, and speak a dialect of the Polynesian language. They are a part of French Oceania, with a French administrator at the island of Fakarava and under the larger jurisdiction of the French Oceanic government in Tahiti. The district officials of individual islands are, however, commonly native chiefs.

ORIGIN of the NAME

Each island has its native name, or names, which the designations given by Spanish, English and American explorers have failed in most cases to supplant. As a group, the archipelago came to be called Paumotu, which has been interpreted poetically Cloud of Islands, but which present-day Tahitians derive from the wars that ravaged the western Tuamotu in the savage old days before they were annexed to Tahiti by King Pomare I (1788-1803). So many islands had been conquered by the fierce warriors of Anaa, and so many inhabitants of those islands had fled to Tahiti, that the islands whence they came became known as Paumotu, the Conquered or Destroyed Islands. In later years this name became irksome to some Tuamotuans, who asked that a more dignified name be given them. As a result, the islands became officially Tuamotu, usually translated the Far or Deep Sea Islands. (Note: *itua*, in Polynesian, means toward the sea. The root seems to be *tua*, meaning the back. The seashore of a Tuamotuan island is referred to as the "back" of the island, which is thought of as facing the inner lagoon. It is possible that this sense of "back" may be involved in the name of the archipelago, which is largely to windward, or "at the back of the wind" from Tahiti.)

Seamen and whalers in sailing-ship days commonly called these the Low

Archipelago or the Dangerous Islands, because from their low altitude, imperfect charting and their currents and reefs, they were dangerous to ships.

Most of the islands are of the typical atoll shape, which has been described as an elongated doughnut. A few are nearly circular, but more of them are oval, often with the long axis pointing in the same direction as the archipelago as a whole, from northwest to southeast. The enclosed lagoons within the broken ovals of surrounding islets were famous pearling grounds, but the pearling industry had been suspended when the author visited the islands. The only remaining industry at this writing was the making and shipment of copra, the dried meat of the coconut. The inhabitants derive some income from this source, but live largely by fishing.

Individual islands vary in physical type of inhabitants, to some degree in customs and dialect, and to a greater extent in degree of civilization. In general, civilization decreases as one moves eastward, farther from the center of French Oceanic life in Tahiti.

Napuka, as it has come to be called officially, and its neighbor Tepoto, the two together constituting the "Disappointment Islands" of John Byron, are the northernmost of the Tuamotu, and in the eastern part of that long archipelago. They are relatively isolated, being more than a hundred miles from the nearest land and in a quarter to which passage from Tahiti is not favored by the prevailing winds. They are to some degree typical of the eastern Tuamotu, and because of this relative isolation and the comparative poverty of their people, with less foreign contact, they remain closer to the original primitive life of the Tuamotu than other islands in the archipelago.

Napuka was therefore chosen by Kenneth P. Emory, Bishop Museum ethnologist with the Mangarevan Expedition of the Museum, as a field for intensive study, and at his invitation I remained with him there from May 15 to July 29, 1934. The island, with Tepoto, offered an interesting exhibit of native Polynesian life, at a minimum, so far as French Oceania is concerned, of foreign civilization. The remainder of this appendix of factual information will deal largely with these two islands.

NAPUKA

(Latitude 14:09 south; longitude 141:14 west)

Napuka (native name Tepuka, or, in full, Tepuka á Maruia) is a coral atoll, about four and a half miles long by two miles wide. Its maximum length is roughly from east to west, bearing slightly to the north. The mean width of the land enclosing the interior lagoon is estimated at one-fourth of a mile, and the maximum width of that broken oval of land rim at about half a mile. The lagoon, which thus occupies the center and most of the area of the island, is dotted, especially near the village with small "islets" built up in the course of centuries by depositing the shells of the tridacna clam on shoals. These shellfish (local name *ngaiere*, elsewhere more generally called *pahua*) are an important item in native diet. They are obtained by prying them up from sand or coral, and are shelled on the spot, the meat being taken ashore in

containers. The ;landscape resulting from this practice is a strange sight to one unaccustomed to it.

The village of Tepuka Maruia is situated at the west end of the atoll, and extends from the sea to the lagoon, occupying part of a *motu* or islet-section of the reef enclosing the lagoon. It has two main streets intersecting at right angles and two diagonal streets, one branching off diagonally from each of the two main thoroughfares.

As in most Polynesian communities, there is a multitude of local place-names, each *henua* or small land section having its name. There are also names for the various directions of the compass, the winds, etc.

TEPOTO

Tepoto (native name Tepoto á Maruia or Tepukararo) lies about twelve miles west of Napuka. It is an old atoll whose lagoon apparently has dried up or been destroyed by a slight rising of the island. There is a shallow depression in the center, in which there is a water hole. The "overhanging shores" mentioned by a missionary observer whose account of the island got into the American official pilot book, are merely blocks of coral and of solidified beach sand, which have been torn up and tossed on end by the sea. Tepoto is nearly circular in shape, about a mile in diameter. The village is, like that of Tepuka á Maruia, on the west or leeward side.

The two islands are referred to in native chants as "Pukarua," the two lands of the pisonia trees, and distinguished as Tepuka-runga, that is, the pisonia trees "above" or to the east (Napuka) and Tepukararo, the pisonias "below," that is, down wind or to the wesi (Tepoto).

HISTORY

The two islands were discovered by Commodore John Byron on June 7, 1765, and named by him "Isles of Disappointment" because he was unable to land there on account of rough weather and the apparent hostility of the natives. They were visited by Lieutenant Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition on August 23, 1839. They came nominally under French control with the rest of the Tuamotu but that control was exercised only in fairly recent times. The grandson of the last independent "king" was still living at Tepuka á Maruia at the time of my visit.

According to native accounts, these two islands were ruled in ancient times by a chiefess named Maruia, whence the name. Maruia came from an island called Pukapuka, the easternmost of three or more islands of that name, on the maps as Honden or Dog Island, and at late report uninhabited. The ancient name of this Pukapuka was Mahina-te-tahora.

The islands probably were peopled, as other outlying lands have been, by fugitives defeated in war or by younger sons ambitious to carve out chiefdoms for themselves in new lands. Probably they came from the surrounding high islands, since the low islands, being less fertile and more limited in natural resources, are considered inferior homes. The genealogies of the people

residing there today mention some ancestors as having come from Tahiti, one from "Nukuhiva" in the Marquesas, and others from lands now unknown.

The islands were avoided by sailing ships, because of their relative poverty of resources, the hostility of their inhabitants, and the dangers of navigation, long after the high archipelagoes were well known. Whalers sometimes called at the western Tuamotu for the green herb known as "scurvy-grass" and for fresh coconuts, but these more remote islands of the east remained very little known. Since the advent of steam, they were seldom visited until the copra trade flourished. They have, however, been touched by Roman Catholic missionary influence since about sixty years ago.

APPROACH

Landing at Napuka is made usually at the village end, just north of the west point of the island, and southwest of the main entrance to the lagoon. This entrance is too shallow for anything but canoes; it is possible to wade across it. Apparently it is not used by the natives; they carry their seagoing canoes overland between the sea and the lagoon.

Landing on Tepoto is near the village, on the west side of the island.

Both islands can be approached fairly near and landing made in small boats. There is no harbor, in the European sense of the word. The natives have an *ava* or harbor for canoes, which is simply a place on the reef where landing can be made easily in favorable weather. At Napuka, there is a small depression in the reef, into which canoes are run and drawn up on the shore. Schooners make landings in large surfboats, choosing a favorable spot and timing the approach so as to run up on the smooth reef with a wave.

The shore line is little if at all indented. There are several shallow passes into the Napuka lagoon, but the general contour of both islands is fairly regular.

Contact with the outside world has been more frequent in the last twenty or thirty years than formerly. A copra schooner calls at intervals of nominally a month, but actually less often. Two or three months may go by without sight of a sail. A government vessel gets around to the islands perhaps once a year. There is no other communication with other parts of the world. Natives travel between the two islands by canoe, and in cases of emergency communicate between Napuka and Tepoto by smoke signals.

WEATHER

No meteorological records have been kept, but the climate is of course oceanic, and thus, despite comparative nearness to the equator, not excessively hot. Temperature of water in the house occupied by Emory and the writer was taken at 79 to 80 degrees. Nights were cool, usually with a breeze, and about three o'clock in the morning it was often comfortable to draw up a blanket. The days were warm, but not oppressive. There was little rain. The prevailing wind is the southeast trade.

Use of wild plants has been reduced somewhat by destruction of much of the native forest to make room for coconut trees and by the introduction of a few foreign articles which have replaced those formerly made from native plants.

Cordage, however, is still made from fiber of the coconut husk and from the green root of the pandanus; or, for rougher and more temporary use, from the twisted leaf-sheath of the coconut palm. The best cord, however, is made from the fibers of *ngeongeo*, a plant of the nettle family.

Coconut fronds are used in construction of houses; pandanus is also used, but to less extent than formerly; there are fewer pandanus trees now and the work of making a pandanus-leaf house is greater than that of making a coconut-leaf house, though the resulting structure is more durable.

Small dugout canoes are made from local trees, and there remains at least one old style Tuamotuan canoe of pieces of local wood (probably *tou*, cordia), sewn together with coconut-fiber cord. There are also wooden food bowls, coconut-shell water dippers, scrapers made of bone and shell, spades of turtle bone, pearl shell and similar materials. The old style cutting tools, adzes of tridacna shell, knives of eels' jawbones, etc., exist now largely as relics, having been supplanted by foreign steel.

Baskets, mats and hats are made of pandanus leaf, and temporary and permanent containers of coconut leaves. These articles do not enter into commerce, being manufactured for local use only.

There is some question as to whether the coconut may be regarded as a "wild" plant. It was relatively rare in ancient times and, in its present quantity, has been introduced and planted in rows, though it needs little if any cultivation. It is an important item of food supply and is used in many ways: the young nuts for drinking; very small budding nuts for eating, husk and all, like fruit, and for juggling; mature nuts as a sweet or grated; the sprouted haustoria are eaten as a confection. The dried meat of the coconut, copra, is the sole export.

The fruit of Morinda citrifolia (native name *horahora*, known in Hawaii as *noni*) is eaten by children, and we were told that it sometimes was cooked as food. It also has medicinal proper ties effective in reduction of fractures and sprains and in treatment of infections. We were told that *pokea*, a species of portulaca, was eaten as a green, but more frequently used as fodder for pigs.

The fleshy phalange of the pandanus drupe, which in these islands is large and sweet, is eaten. It is probable that in ancient times, before coconuts became plentiful, these were a "pandanus people," baking the fruit underground, or extracting the kernel from the dried drupe, as is still done at Vahitahi. They also made a bread, in former times, from the scraped starch of the pandanus.

The clearing away of the native forest (pandanus, pisonia cordia, etc.) to make place for coconuts has brought about, in a way, an economic revolution.

An economy based on fish and pandanus has given way to one founded on fish and coconuts. Loss of the original forest also has hastened decline of old customs, through disuse of old materials and their replacement by foreign or new ones. The most serious result of the copra industry has been the introduction of the profit motive, which, however, operates to a limited extent.

ANIMAL LIFE

Most of the animal life, aside from fish, birds, and a few insects, has been introduced. The natives keep pigs, chickens and ducks as an emergency food supply, but rely mainly upon fish, shellfish and coconuts. We were told on Tepoto that the eggs of fowls were not eaten; on Napuka, that they were.

Dogs and cats are kept as pets, but we were told that they were not eaten. It was explained that the dog was a new animal in the islands, not having been known in ancient times, and thus the natives had never acquired a taste for dog meat. This is at variance with a statement in the U. S. Pilot Book, and I observed a cat being prepared for eating after it had been killed accidentally, at Tepoto.

A few pigskin belts and hatbands were the only animal products we saw used as clothing. Feathers of ducks and chickens were sometimes made into ornamental hatbands, but were not used for stuffing pillows. Most natives use a log of pandanus wood for a pillow; a few of the younger ones make a very hard pillow stuffed with tree-cotton (kapok) shipped from the Society Islands. Chicken feathers, carefully trimmed, are used for cleaning wax from the ears; the natives enjoy the tickling sensation.

Wild birds are caught at night with nets or, we were told, with a cord attached to a stone, somewhat after the fashion of the South American bolas, and eaten. Eggs of sea birds such as the sooty tern (*kaveka*), now rather scarce on the inhabited islands, are preferred to those of domestic fowl.

Turtle shells are used as containers; turtle bones for spades; other shells for various purposes, such as scrapers.

EARNING a LIVING

The natives have no need to "earn" a living by engaging in trades or occupations, as a living is supplied by natural resources. Life is still in a primitive fishing and crudely agricultural stage, in which each family provides for itself. A native can make, from materials at hand, almost any article he needs. With the copra trade, however, some foreign articles have been introduced, for which it is necessary to have money. The islands have this one industry, copra, and a little money is earned by it; this earning, however, is collective rather than individual.

The copra "depression," though it has reduced income, has not caused suffering, since the things that could be bought with the proceeds of copra were mostly things that were not really needed, or that could be replaced by native articles.

Coconuts fall when ripe, are collected by hand in piles, on the ground, and

chopped in half with a large knife one foreign tool that has become practically indispensable. The nuts are then left on the ground, in the open, to dry, and after natural shrinkage separates them from the shells, the meat is dried further in the sun, being taken indoors or covered with coconut fronds in the rare case of rain.

It appears that the depression affected the natives but little since they have practically no investment and their time is not otherwise very valuable.

No other sources of income appear, except occasional sale of a chicken or a pig to a visiting schooner.

When pearl diving was still profitable, some of the young men went to other islands to engage in the industry. As far as I was able to learn, pearl diving never had been conducted at Napuka, though a few pearl oysters exist in the lagoon. Probably the quantity is not sufficient. A small shellfish (*pipi*), resembling an oyster, yields small black pearls which, however, are not very valuable.

A number of young men have gone to sea, and other young people have moved to the island of Fakahina, presumably for greater economic opportunities.

DWELLINGS

We observed four or five types of house constructed of local materials or largely so.

(a) The old type of Tuamotuan house, made of woven pandanus leaves, low, with rounded ends; not so much a house as a shelter from rain and sun, with an opening at the end away from the wind, and without flooring, resting on the bare ground. There was still one such house at Napuka, and several on Tepoto. We were told that a house of this type would with stand a hurricane.

(b) A transitional type of house was most common at the time of our visit. It is rectangular, larger and higher than the pandanus-leaf house, built of woven panels of coconut leaves bound or nailed to a frame of poles, the panels running horizontally instead of vertically as in the Hawaiian *halau*. This type of house usually has a door at each end and often a third door at one side. These doors, like the door of the pandanus house, may be closed by leaning an old canoe board against the house, or with a panel of coconut leaves.

(c) The "modern" type of coconut-leaf house is larger and higher than the transitional type, of the same shape and with the same arrangement of doors, but often raised from the ground on a stone platform of the same size as the house, and floored with small pebbles. The house in which we lived was so constructed, with walls of woven coconut fronds and roof of the more durable pandanus, with an over-thatch of coconut leaves. This house could be closed with doors made of bits of boxes nailed together, and locked with a padlock. The older houses had no way of locking.

The frame of these houses is of roughly hewn timbers and poles, notched

at the ends to fit together, with supporting posts sunk into the ground and lighter poles laid between, to which the leaf-panels are fastened. Nails are now coming into use in place of the ancient lashings of coconut-husk fiber.

(d) A large new house was being built for the chief while we were on the island. This structure was rather elaborate, with strips of coconut midrib (*niau*) nailed transversely in contrasting directions on frames divided into squares, making diagonal or "herringbone" patterns. This house was thatched like the others, but was much larger and higher, with window-openings, and a stone platform in front on which, when it was completed, the chief would hold court.

(e) One house, different from any we had seen elsewhere on the island, was built of midribs of the coconut leaf, laid vertically and bound together, with a thatch roof. This house some what resembled the bamboo houses of Tahiti, and perhaps indicated foreign influence, as the man who owned it had been at sea in his youth and visited many islands.

A house approximating to the "modern" coconut-leaf house was built for the missionary while we were on the island. The construction work took a little more than a week. Timbers from an old house were used for the frame. Fresh coconut fronds were plaited and nailed on the frame for the walls, and a thatch of coconut leaves applied. Foreign tools were used - not without several injuries to the users. This house was inferior in workmanship to those built without foreign tools and to those in which lashings of cord were used instead of nails.

LANDSCAPING

There is no garden around a house at Napuka or Tepoto, as in some of the western Tuamotu. The arrangement varies, but one often seen consists of the house, a pigpen built of loose stones, perhaps a chicken house (though the chickens may roost on the roof), a stone platform to keep food out of reach of dogs and pigs, and a low semicircular stone enclosure for bathing, high enough to conceal a crouching occupant. Implements are few, and require no special shed. The older houses have a cleared space around them, swept clean of pebbles and rubbish, on which the occupants may lay their mats for sleeping out of doors in fine weather, or rest during the day. Where sand is available, these dooryards are sanded, the material being hauled by hand, in turtle shells, from the beach. This chaste bareness likely enough is an ancient Tuamotuan trait, for the sacred en closures (*marae*) of pagan days were kept swept and picked bare in like manner.

INTERIOR DECORATION

Furnishing is simple: a few mats - coarse ones of pandanus or coconut leaves on the floor and finer ones of pandanus leaf on which to sleep; usually a small pandanus log under one end of the mat for a pillow; sometimes an auxiliary log to be placed under the feet or knees. There is a chest in one corner, with a lock, to hold the family genealogy and the few family

possessions. A pole or cord across a corner supports articles of clothing, sleeping covers, etc. Fishing spears, paddles, etc., may be stacked in a corner or laid over rafters, and fishhooks stuck into the thatch. Coils of cured pandanus leaf, for making mats or hats, hang on nails or pegs; there is usually a round block, made of a piece of coconut trunk, for shaping huts. One house had a somewhat decrepit sewing machine; others had charcoal irons. There may be, in some houses, a granite-ware plate or two stuck into the thatch, and perhaps a bowl or two sitting about; most people now have either five-gallon square oil tins or galvanized iron pails for carrying water.

Lying somewhere in the yard is a long pole with a hook on the end, for bringing down young coconuts for drinking. There is a long, heavy knife for opening coconuts, and perhaps a very few smaller utensils. One of the most common of these is an iron scraper, shaped like the rowel of an old-fashioned spur, mounted on a stick, for shaving coconut.

One house contained a bed - apparently solely by way of ornament, for a native would not think of sleeping on it. There were also two tables; the only one we saw in use was in the premises of a half-Chilean from Easter Island.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

WATER SUPPLY: Fresh water is obtained from the village well, a square excavation about six feet deep, walled with roughly dressed stones. The water in it was ten to twelve inches deep, on a sandy bottom, and was of good quality and apparently germ-free. Use of this well is governed by certain elementary sanitary regulations, which are strictly enforced. Water is dipped from it in coconut-shell bottles lowered by a cord, or in small tins such as salad oil comes in, and decanted from these small containers into larger ones, usually five-gallon oil or gasoline cans, though a few trough-like bowls hollowed out of wood still remain. There is also a "private" well on land belonging to the chief, and we saw a few other old wells, apparently disused. An old resident told us these wells had been abandoned because they had been fouled by crabs.

Young coconuts are used for drinking, and Emory and I drank little else while we were on the island. Well water is used mainly for bathing and washing clothes, although some families prefer to drink well water, saying coconut water fails to quench their thirst. This taste may be a vestige of ancestral experience on a high island, such as Tahiti, where water is obtained from streams.

FUEL SUPPLY: Coconut husks, of which there is a virtually unlimited quantity, are the fuel supply of the islands. When dry they make a hot fire, with little smoke. A little charcoal is made by burning coconut shells, for home use. It is used to heat the large old-fashioned irons with which the women press clothes to wear on Sunday.

Matches are now used largely for ignition, being obtainable at the Chinese store. Sometimes a coconut husk is lighted to serve as tinder, and one old

woman had a burning-glass. The natives still know, however, the art of making fire by friction, and use it in emergency.

LIGHT: Kerosene lanterns are used for lighting - an important matter in a Tuamotuan household, in view of the almost universal fear of nocturnally wandering spirits. Oil, however, is not always available; in such cases, a wedge of copra is propped against a stone and lit. (NOTE: At the island of Vahitahi I saw a wick run into a bottle which contained, I was told, coconut oil, making a crude lamp.)

HOME LIFE

A household may consist of several persons not necessarily of the immediate blood family; children are usually brought up by their grandparents, and there may be one or more adopted children and relatives of varying degrees of relationship, real property being held not by individuals but by families, so that all kinfolk have a claim upon it. A person may sleep fairly regularly in one house and eat customarily at another. Several people divided their time among several houses in which they had a family interest.

DIVISION OF LABOR: The division of labor is the natural one: the women remain around the house, taking care of the children and doing such work as can be done at home; the men fish and prepare copra. There is no hard and fast division: women sometimes help in drying and sacking copra, and those who have no near male relatives at home do their own fishing - usually in the inner lagoon, and not at sea.

Men set up the frames for houses; women weave the panels and men attach the panels to the frame and apply the thatching. Men also did the stone work at the well. Women clean up the yards and, with the aid of elder children, sweep the streets. Women weave mats and hats, carry water, wash and iron clothes. Large cooking, such as communal baking of bread, the cooking of turtle or large fish in earth ovens, etc., is done by men; smaller cooking may be done by either men or women.

Food is cooked and eaten in the open. There are no kitchens or detached cookhouses, as in some other islands. Fish are eaten raw or broiled on hot stones, or baked underground; octopus are beaten with a stick on a flat rock and baked in shallow earth ovens; tridacna clams are eaten raw, boiled in an iron pot over an open fire, or dried and preserved on strings as an emergency ration. Chicken, pig and turtle are baked underground.

Two foreign foods have entered to some extent, when funds permit. These are wheat flour and rice. Rice is boiled in an iron pot or a square oil tin over an open fire and eaten with the fingers. Flour is mixed with water (without yeast) and the resulting paste rolled up in a container of coconut leaves and baked communally in an earth oven with a protective covering of guettarda and tournefortia leaves, whose fragrance removes the somewhat offensive odor or flavor of the coral with which the ovens are covered.

Another and more palatable use of this flour is to make a flat cake, adding

shredded coconut and shredded papaya, and roast it, wrapped in leaves, on a hot stone. Sometimes *pia*, the flour of manioc or tapioca, is similarly used, as well as for starching Sunday shirts.

The menu varies with the nature and quantity of the day's catch at sea. Probably the most frequent staple is tridacna clam, which is eaten in great quantities. Sample meals on which notes were taken were:

(a) Rice, papaya, mature coconut, drinking-coconut.

(b) Tridacna, papaya, drinking-nut.

(c) Tridacna, mature coconut, drinking-nut.

(d) Raw fish, roast octopus, broiled fish, papaya, mature coconut, drinking-nut.

(e) Broiled fish, drinking-nut.

(f) Tridacna, roasted bread, drinking-nut, mature coconut, pandanus fruit.

Two meals a day seem to be the average, depending on availability of food. In early morning - for people get up at dawn - there is usually a breakfast of whatever is available, most commonly little but coconuts and perhaps papaya. During the day, a little coconut may be nibbled, or anything that is handy, but there is little food until the men return from fishing, about four or five o'clock in the afternoon. Supper follows as soon as it can be prepared, and in any case before dark. People may eat again later in the evening, or get up at night for a snack, if food is available. When we asked what time was mealtime, an old native replied: "Whenever there is food." As no fishing is done on Sunday, an attempt is made to get enough food on Saturday to last over Sunday. Otherwise there is little reserve supply.

Turtle is eaten, in season, communally, probably with vestiges of ancient religious ceremonies connected with placating the ancestral spirits.

Mealtime in a Tuamotuan household is quite different from the "family board" of an American home. Eating is rather an individual affair: each takes his piece of raw or cooked fish, his drinking-nut and papaya or coconut, and sits on a dry coconut in the dooryard, somewhere near the cooking fire. There is little conversation at these times, and a person eating often turns his back on the others. It is possible that these manners are survivals from ancient tabus. I gathered the impression that it was tabu to eat under a roof, and there seemed to be a rule against watching others eat. We did not learn whether men and women on this island formerly had been forbidden by custom to eat together, but such is a widespread Polynesian custom, now largely abrogated, which may account for the absence of "family spirit" in a Tuamotuan meal.

Eating is with the fingers. A few plates are used, but usually food is held in the hands or laid on fresh green leaves. Large pieces, such as whole fish, are laid on turtle shells for carving.

Salt is not used.

After eating, it is customary to pour fresh water over the hands.

CLOTHING

Clothing, except for hats, is now of foreign materials. The *pareu* (local word *kareu*), a two-yard strip of cotton cloth, is worn wrapped around the loins, with the end tucked in like a bath-towel, or, by the men, the ends brought up (*hume*) between the legs so as to approximate a pair of trunks. The pareu, however, is a foreign-made substitute for the ancient *reu* which was woven of pandanus leaves. A small loincloth (*tihere*), shorter and scantier than the Hawaiian *malo*, is worn by children and older men; this, too, is nowadays of foreign material.

Most adults, however, have foreign clothes and commonly wear them, especially on Sunday.

Men wear short or long dungarees and white cotton singlets. Some have white shirts for Sunday, which are carefully washed, ironed and starched, and worn with the collar open and the sleeves unbuttoned and flaring.

Women wear dresses made by themselves of goods purchased at the Chinese store or aboard visiting schooners. These are of knee length, usually with short sleeves and high in front (due to missionary influence), but counteracted by the tendency of the upper part of the dress to tear or to sag open at strategic points. Sometimes these garments are made of flour sacks. Some women wear a one-piece undergarment, either with or without an over-skirt. Most of them wear a pareu either over or under the dress, or thrown over the shoulders like a cape. Around the house in the morning, or on Saturday afternoons while washing clothes, many women wear only the pareu. This garment may be tucked around the waist, leaving the upper part of the body bare, or worn high and drawn tight over the bosom, the lower edge of the cloth reaching about to mid-thigh.

When the bosom is covered, it is so, apparently, not from ideas of "modesty" approximating European notions, but rather because it is thought fashionable to do as Europeans do. The breasts are not considered a tabu portion of the anatomy. Polynesian women, however, are extremely "modest" in other respects, never appearing nude - to the great grief of artists in Tahiti, whose only recourse is to engage prostitutes, furnish plenty of wine, and drive to secluded places where, even then, the lady is likely to refuse to pose. When bathing, Tuamotuan women commonly keep themselves partly covered with a pareu, crouching behind the stone wall of the bathing-enclosure.

Children commonly wear the pareu. Some boys wear a tiny loincloth, and some of the younger children wear no clothes at all.

The islanders are ambitious to possess white shoes, but they had none of any kind. They are accustomed to walk on their coral island and dance on it barefooted, and have a crust on the soles of their feet that can be pared like a horse's hoof. In three months' experimentation, it was found that the feet of white men become toughened by going barefoot, but not to an extent to enable them to keep up with the natives who have been walking in that manner all their years.

Such clothes as they possess are usually ragged and somewhat dingy.

They are washed frequently, by lathering the garments in strong laundry soap, and wringing them out repeatedly in cold fresh water. They are dried flat on the coral ground, weighted down with bits of stone, and ironed on a mat, with a charcoal iron. Most of them show rusty spots, which at the time we understood to be from the iron, but on another island we were told that it was a stain from the dead coral on which they are laid to dry.

The tendency, illogically enough, is to keep clothes on in the warm part of the day and to take them off in the cool night. A few sleep in day clothes, most people in a pareu. For bed covering, a light mat of pandanus leaves is thrown over, or a *tapoipoi*, which is a light coverlet of cloth, often embroidered in simple floral designs.

Women wear straight or curved combs in their hair, which commonly is combed up straight back from the forehead and worn in an erect tuft supported by the comb. Finger rings and earrings have replaced the old feather ornaments and fragrant fern ear-drops. There are a few pins and necklaces, obtained from visiting ships, and handkerchiefs and safety pins are used as ornaments. As the natives have colds only when contagion is brought by a ship, they have few handkerchiefs. They also have few towels. Dishes, which are few, are rinsed in cold water, scraped with a bit of coconut shell if sticky, and dried in the air.

The VILLAGE

The village of Tepuka Maruia is laid out along straight streets about eight to ten paces wide, curbed with coral stone, and swept with coconut-flower stalks, leaving a flooring of sand and small pebbles, hence called *purumu* or "broom"that which is swept. Houses are laid out more or less regularly along the streets but not at a uniform distance from them.

The general appearance is neat; yards as well as streets are swept (though there are no lawns) and rubbish from copra work is gathered up and burned.

For a week during our stay the entire village turned out on a cleanup campaign. Another week all the men worked on repairing and improving the village well.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture consists mainly of coconut plantations, which require little or no care. Tin cans, when available, are buried around the roots of coconut trees, on the theory that the iron will strengthen the tree. Otherwise no care was observed, except pruning of dead fronds, in the interest of neatness.

In the more fertile soil on the windward side of the island, papaya and squash have been planted, and we saw one very sickly looking pineapple. These have been introduced within the last few years. These plantations are communal, and the produce, harvested weekly, is distributed communally.

The soil of the island is largely decomposed coral and sand, with a little vegetable matter. The island is a broken ring of narrow land, all flat and low, around the central lagoon. As is common in Polynesian countries, parcels of

land belonging to a family group are often far apart. A family may hold land at both ends of the island, and most of them do. At certain seasons, most of the village moves over to the windward side of the island to harvest copra.

The land utilization seems to work out fairly well, but the people would be better off if they had planted fewer coconut palms and conserved more of the natural forest.

Seasonal variations, as far as I know, are slight, but there probably is some variation in rainfall which affects the copra plantations, as copra does not keep well when wet by fresh water.

Papaya and squashes are merely allowed to grow, without attention. Papaya are harvested weekly, men being chosen or volunteering for the canoe trip. The distribution has been explained elsewhere in the text.

The day's work varies: it may be cutting, drying, or sacking copra; it may be fishing; it may be carpentry. When community work is under way, such as rebuilding of the well, the men are divided into groups, one to do the work, one to procure food.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is by hand and by canoe. Papaya are brought from the windward side in canoes, sailing or paddling according to the wind. Tridacna clams are carried in baskets. Copra near the village is sacked and carried on the shoulders, two hundred to three hundred pounds to the man. From the other end of the island, it is brought in canoes. Most land transportation, such as stones for the well, timbers for houses, etc., is on the shoulders, usually with a carrying-pole. Large stones are suspended by ropes from a log and the log carried on the shoulders of several men. Canoes are carried overland on the shoulders - not at arms' length as are Hawaiian canoes. Rubbish is dragged away in turtle shells, drawn by ropes of the twisted leaf-sheath of the coconut palm. Sand is brought from the beach for the streets and dooryards in the same manner. Water is carried in buckets or in oil cans, one at each end of a pole. There is not a wheel on the island.

FISHING

Fishing is the principal source of food. It is done both in the lagoon and in the open sea, but in the latter case seldom far from shore. Most fishing is with hook and line or with spears. Near the lagoon entrance there are fish traps or weirs, constructed of stone. I was told that small throw-nets also were used, but no large nets and not the *hukilau* method of Hawaii, which is not necessary here, because of the abundance of fish. Octopus are speared; tridacna and other shellfish gathered from the reef in the manner explained elsewhere in the text. Turtles, in season, are grappled hand to hand and maneuvered ashore; sometimes a short line with a large hook is used.

ORGANIZATION

There is a co-operative society for the handling of copra, which is a

relatively recent development in the islands' economic life. The proceeds of copra are divided according to the amount of land formerly held by the four clans.

Social organization was formerly on a clan basis. The four clans have combined into a commune. The result is a mixed economy: fruits of the land and sea, such as papaya, turtle and fish in large quantity, are communal property and are distributed equally. Individual small catches of fish are consumed by the family of the man who catches them, or, if there is a surplus, given to relatives.

Land ownership is on a family basis. A native will speak of a certain section as "my" land, but more often as "land belonging to us;" in either case, group ownership, rather than individual ownership, apparently is meant.

The Catholic church has largely taken the place of such social organizations as may have existed. Services are held not only Sunday but each morning, and three nights a week; "*haapiiraa*," or evening school is three nights a week. The community also gathers at the principal street intersection Sunday morning after church, and at other times when called by the chief, for public discussion of community questions, settlement of disputes, etc.

RECREATION

Recreation for adults consists mainly of community singing. The "evening school" may be considered recreation, being more social than educative. It consists of reading of Bible lessons, singing and some rudimentary miscellaneous information. Church services also probably do their part toward satisfying social recreational needs.

Men play a game resembling checkers, with stones on a marked out place in the street. Young men play a game resembling a form of football, kicking a ball between two goals. They say they formerly had a game resembling hockey, but it has fallen into disuse.

Children have many pastimes: body-surfing on the outer reef, swimming in the lagoon, skipping rope, sailing ingenious toy boats, pinwheels, stilts, tug-of-war, a game of running and throwing suggesting "one old cat," a game of tossing stones at a stake, somewhat resembling "duck on the rock," throwing at each other balls made of seaweed, etc.

Children and adults make string-figures, and juggle small coconuts, both to the accompaniment of chants.

Some of the young men played a kind of leapfrog, holding the head up instead of down. They also held a bar of coconut midrib between two men, at shoulder height, but instead of jumping over, ran under it.

Young men said they sometimes had cockfights, but we did not see this sport.

Young people dance native dances on moonlight nights, chanting or playing harmonicas and blowing across the mouth of a bottle. There is one guitar (lacking strings till we supplied them), and a phonograph, disabled, the

property of a Chinese merchant.

There seemed to be no regular festivals, but ceremonial feasts are held in connection with the manhood rite of boys, and certain rites accompany the eating of turtle. The fourteenth of July, Bastille Day, is nominally observed, but the observance the year we were there consisted only of running up the French flag and beating on a tin can. The return of the chief, which occurred after our departure, was the occasion for a formal march of the young and middle-aged men and women, with special songs.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE

Foreign influence has been confined mainly to missionary work by Roman Catholics, and to the contact afforded by brief visits of copra schooners. A few residents have visited more "advanced" islands and brought buck some knowledge of foreign ways. Aside from ourselves, no white people were living on the island, and we were told that none ever had done so, except the Catholic missionary. There are two Chinese, who keep the only store on Napuka, who live with native women but have no children by them - though a child of an other native woman is popularly attributed to one of the Chinese. There are about half a dozen other foreigners: one woman half Tahitian and half Chinese, married to a native; and a few other Tahitians and natives of other Tuamotu islands; one man of Chilean and Easter Island ancestry.

None of these people speak English or French. The language of the island is solely Polynesian: the Tahitian and Tuamotuan dialects of that language.

Foreigners, after six months' residence, are regarded as members of the community and must share in the communal work, but are not permitted to acquire land. They have, however, in practice, the use of land in which their native wives have family rights.

We were told that there never had been any children of white blood on the two islands. There are two part-Chinese children.

There is evidence that seems to indicate a mixture of racial strains at some remote period. The Caucasian (*ehu*) type of Polynesian is strongly represented (about ten per cent of the population shows traces of it) in reddish or yellow hair and Caucasian features. There is also a type resembling the East Indian, and a type resembling the Hawaiian but less inclined to obesity; there are a few with traces of other possible ancestry. It has been conjectured that the latter represent contacts of the Polynesians with other peoples in the course of their migrations, or an aboriginal Tuamotuan race, or a former slave population obtained from some conquered people. Certain etymological data tend to bear out these conjectures.

FOREIGN INFLUENCES OBSERVED: Foreign influences comprise mainly use of foreign clothing and tools, use of nails, eating of rice and wheat flour; the Catholic religion, the copra industry; Tahitian influence on language and to some extent on construction of houses.

DISEASES and DEPOPULATION

There is no census, but the population of Napuka was estimated, locally, for purposes of communal distribution of food, at 192, excluding infants in arms, and that of Tepoto at 45. The chief said the population had been increasing.

At the time of our visit the people showed a high average of health, which we attributed to relative infrequency of contact with the outside world and the small degree to which foreign habits had been introduced.

There were few old people, however, and we were told that epidemics in the past had reduced the population and taken off the elderly. The nature of these epidemics was possibly dysentery introduced by ships from Tahiti, but it might have been any disease such as chicken pox, mumps, measles, to which the natives have not built up an immunity.

We were told that there was no foreign disease in the two islands at the time (other than colds brought by a ship); but we were unable to confirm this conclusively, in the absence of a medical survey. Our impression was that there was danger to community health in the drift of young people to the island of Fakahina (thirty in recent years). Aside from direct depopulation, some of them, returning, may introduce diseases which will reduce Napuka and Tepoto to the condition of some other Tuamotu islands. It is possible that this process has already begun.

The relatively large number of children and the excellent dentition seem to indicate a high degree of community health.

In the three months we were there, one death occurred on Tepoto (attributed to tuberculosis) and none on Napuka. Two births occurred.

We were told of a young woman who five years earlier was near death from what was believed to be tuberculosis. She had recovered and was apparently in good health, though not quite as strong as others. Her recovery was attributed to a foreign medicine, but may have been the result of rest in an outdoor climate.

MISSIONARY INFLUENCE

The two islands had been under missionary influence about sixty years. There were still living, at the time of our visit, people who remembered the heathen time. A Catholic priest had resided on the island, but was absent when we were there. An elaborate stone church of foreign style had been erected but was not in use, not having been dedicated.

Missionary influence has substituted the church for the old pagan organization centering around the marae, and thus has brought about a partial revolution in social life. Other results, such as use of foreign clothing (which would have come about without the church but which has no doubt been encouraged by missionaries), use of foreign tools, etc., may be attributed only partly to clerical influence. It is probable, however, that the church is responsible largely for the extent of use of the Tahitian instead of the Tuamotuan dialect, Tahitian being the language used in church. The church

also favors high-necked dresses, with sleeves, and it is possible that the improved style of coconut-leaf house on a flooring of pebbles may have been suggested by missionaries as more sanitary than the old.

The church apparently has made little impression on some fundamental Polynesian customs - notably little on the sex customs of the young people - but has destroyed others, mainly the actual marae ceremonies.

LANGUAGE

No one living on the island at the time we were there - except the two Chinese, who spoke a Cantonese dialect - could speak, read or write any language but Polynesian. The language situation was very interesting, inasmuch as many common objects are represented by three different words of identical meaning - suggesting the remnants of three separate languages or dialects.

Of three words signifying the same thing, one commonly is the Tahitian form; one is a general Polynesian form resembling the Hawaiian or the Maori; the third we were unable to relate, in most cases, to any known language. This third language, if language it be, is known by the natives as "the root speech" (*te reko tumu*), a designation which may indicate its greater antiquity.

Thus, for "water," the Tahitian word *pape* is understood; as is the general Polynesian word *vai*, also used in Tahiti until it became a tabu word; but the word in common use is *komo*, which occurs, as far as I know, in no other Polynesian dialect. I am told it does occur, with the same meaning, in an American Indian language, which may be merely a coincidence. The noun "food" is denoted by the Tahitian *maa* (Tuamotuan form *manga*); and more commonly by *katinga*, probably a fairly general Polynesian word, derived from *kakati*, to chew or bite; but we were told that there exists also a "root word" *ngira*. The verb "to eat" is *amu*, as in Tahitian, and *kai* as in most Polynesian dialects (Hawaiian *'ai*), but certain old people spoke of a root word *noe*.

The water of the young coconut is commonly *komo viavia*, though the Tahitian *pape ha(k)ari* is understood. A young man or a husband or lover is *tané*, as in other Polynesian dialects, but also, in the root speech, *kaifa*. The root word *morire*, for woman, seems on these islands to have passed out of common use, having been supplanted by the general Polynesian word *vahine*.

To bathe is *hopu i te pape*, as in Tahiti, or *(k)apu(k)apu i te komo*, in the root speech.

Strangest of all were the numerals, which the writer was required to learn as his first lesson in the "root language." A comparison with two other Polynesian dialects may be of interest: numbers from one to ten:

Hawaiian	*Tahitian*	*Reko tumu*
ekahi	hoe, tahi	a rari
elua	a piti, rua	aiti
etoru	atoru	angeti

eha	aha	aope
elima	apae, arima	amihe
eono	aono	ahene
ehiku	ahitu	atika
ewalu	avau	ahava
eiwa	aiva	ngohuru
umi	ahuru	tapahi reka

Of the ten *reko tumu* numerals, only two resemble at all any numerals in the other dialects compared. *Aiti* for "two" is sufficiently like Tahitian a *piti*; and *ngohuru* is close enough to Tahitian *ahuru* (from the general Polynesian *angahuru*, Hawaiian *anahulu*, ten days) except that in Napukan it has been shifted to mean nine instead of ten. When the count reaches twenty, the general Polynesian word *takau* is brought into use, with the qualifying prefixes from the root-speech: thus twenty is *arar takau*; forty is *aiti takau*, and so on. Evidently counting is by twenties, instead of by forties as in Hawaii. The foreign terms *hanere*, one hundred, and *tauatini*, a thousand, have been introduced.

In common speech, the *reko tumu* numerals have been supplanted by the Tahitian, save in the compound, *arari huru*, (literally "one kind") meaning "the same as."

Several possibilities are suggested by this triple language. The Tahitian is easy enough to account for, and the Old Polynesian likewise, but whence the *reko tumu*? The natives had no explanation. My companion Emory suggested that it might represent remnants of the speech of a former slave group, since amalgamated into the general population. In such Melanesian and Micronesian vocabularies as were available during preparation of these notes, I was unable to find convincing clues. Perhaps some student of Pacific languages can enlighten us. I did find, however, the same word used for "shark" at Napuka and in some West Pacific dialects: *pako*. The word, again, exists side by side with *mangó* (Hawaiian *manó*). The influence, however, may have been either way: the Micronesians and Melanesians may have picked it up from a Polynesian dialect, or vice versa. Some other interesting words were *hakapoki*, synonym *taio*, to read or count; *toiti*, synonym *ua*, rain; *ngaiere*, for the tridacna clam, generally called in most Polynesian countries where it occurs *pahua; kanoe*, for the edible octopus, called elsewhere *heke* or *hee; ngaeke*, for dog, called in Hawaiian *ilio* and in Tahitian *urí*, and in most Polynesian dialects *kuri; ninganinga*, for the fine white sediment at the border of lagoons; *ngaieti*, for sand, elsewhere called *one*. The list might be prolonged in definitely, but enough has been cited to indicate the interest of this branch of the Polynesian language.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION and MANNERS

The inhabitants of these islands are a clean, healthy people, of about medium height or slightly under it, but very strongly built inclined to be hard

and more slender than Hawaiians. In color they vary from a pale tawny white to a cinnamon brown. The hair is black or reddish-brown, with a few heads of yellow. It is commonly wavy, but both straight and curly hair occur. There is less hair on face or body than is usual among Europeans, but the men raise long black mustaches.

They are rather a merry people; friendly and with a sense of humor. Some of them do not yet understand the European custom of smiling, misinterpreting a smile as an expression of derision. For this reason earlier visitors have described them as sullen and suspicious. Many of the younger people, however, have learned to smile. Once their confidence is gained, they are hospitable and generous, within the Polynesian understanding of generosity, which is an exchange of gifts.

It is customary, when taking leave, to say: "I go now, you stay." Etiquette requires the guest to remain until the host replies: "Go, you, I remain."

It is also customary to greet passersby with "Come and eat." This is not necessarily an invitation, and the proper reply is, "I am full." If the invitation is repeated, however, the host usually means it, and it is proper to accept. A guest in the house nearly always is offered something to eat, if only a bit of coconut.

It is considered bad manners to flash a light on people in the street at night.

It is a breach, not so much of etiquette, as of a serious tabu, to mention fishing when a person is going fishing. One never says, "I am going fishing." One says, "I am going to me sea.' The inference is that the spirits might overhear and warn the fish.

Marriage and related customs have been discussed in the chapter, "Island Love-Dance." In general it may be added that these people, like most Polynesians, take sex less seriously than do peoples of the white race. It is regarded as a natural function, having little or nothing to do with morality, especially in the period of life between the ages of about fourteen and eighteen or twenty. Jealousy apparently exists, however, tempered some what by the traditional demands of hospitality and friendship. A song of the islands runs:

"O friend, take for yourself our mutual *vahine*; there shall be no trouble over it."

A few of the more interesting popular beliefs may be mentioned. If a wife is intimate with a man other than her husband during pregnancy, it is believed the child will not resemble the husband. There were suggestions that the converse is also held. On some islands in the Tuamotu, it is believed that if a man and his wife quarrel, he will get no fish, because the fish will be eaten by sharks. If the father of a child is not known the expression used is that the child was "picked up in the street." It is believed that a girl who is continent in youth will grow up without breasts.

HABITS of LIFE

On arising and before retiring, natives usually rinse out their mouths with well water or coconut juice.

Bathing is frequent, in water carried from the well to the bathing-enclosure near each house. Bathing may be at any time, but few go to bed without an evening bath, and on a warm evening they may get up and bathe again.

Soap is used freely: toilet soap, the more highly scented the better, when obtainable, but this is so costly that rather little of it is used. Most people content themselves with the harsh yellow laundry soap that comes from Tahiti. It is probable that in ancient times they used a bit of porous coral as pumice: the word for soap, *pu-a*, (from *punga*, coral) suggests that use.

Women use perfume when they can get it. This, too, is costly an? rare; the government has forbidden the storekeeper to carry it, because men drank it. Some use the native *monongi*, which is coconut oil extracted crudely by exposing copra to the sun, and scented with the petals of certain flowers. Coconut oil, fresh or scented, is applied to the hair, and probably occasionally to the body. Foreign perfume, when used, is mixed with one part sea water and one part fresh; this, it is said, heightens the fragrance and makes the perfume last longer.

Flowers are worn, but not to such an extent as in Tahiti or Hawaii. We saw not a single flower wreath. Probably this is because flowers are relatively few. Occasionally a red *kofai*, the bloom of a flowering tree (Erythrina), was thrust into the hair or behind the ear. Some people made wreaths of *kainonga*, a climbing vine.

Napuka and Tepoto people prefer to sit on a low seat - a stone, a coconut, or a small bench a few inches high - rather than on the ground or squatting on the heels as some peoples do. The typical sitting posture is erect, with the feet close to the body and the knees drawn up.

They sleep on mats laid on the floor or the ground, with a log, usually of pandanus wood, for a pillow, or sometimes a stone. The sleeping posture is mainly on the side. A family will stretch out side by side across a room, all with their heads on the wooden pillow, and, if the night is chilly, with a large mat drawn over them. They like to elevate (*tirungarunga*) the feet, and often a log is provided for that purpose. On moonlight nights they are often wakeful, and will get up and smoke, talk, sometimes go fishing. If the moonlight is too bright and they want to sleep, they draw a mat over the face.

Particles of dust lodging in the eyes are removed by another person blowing into the eye.

Natives are fond of "cracking" their finger joints by pulling the fingers.

EDUCATION

Most residents of the two islands can read and write Tahitian. There is no regular system of education, but we were told that the older children taught the younger ones to read, write and count. They read from any angle, with

equal ease - probably the result of having had one book or printed page for a large number of students. As there are no real schools, this rudimentary education probably proceeded, in the first instance, from missionaries.

An "evening school" is held three times a week in the same building where church services are conducted. As there is no teacher, there can be little instruction, but the better-informed natives share their knowledge with others, and there may be some discussion and reading aloud of Bible lessons, etc. When a priest was in residence, there probably was more systematic instruction. The "evening school" at the time of our visit consisted mostly of community singing.

Natives do not read or write fluently, but slowly and laboriously. In writing, they do not connect or separate syllables to define where one word stops or another begins, but break them up arbitrarily. They also have no notion of punctuation.

As there is practically nothing to read, and nobody to write to, these accomplishments are not of great practical value.

A curious sidelight on the effect of the acquisition of the art of writing was contributed by Fariua, the sage of Fangatau. He said that after he had written down the ancient chants, which had been handed down orally for many generations, he was unable longer to remember them. He had put them on paper, and they had gone from his mind.

The principal practical use of writing is in preserving genealogies, by which land rights are determined. Formerly these were chanted, but under an approximation to the white man's court procedure, the written genealogies may be introduced, in cases of disputed ownership, as evidence.

Mathematics remains in an elementary stage; even Fariua, the fount of wisdom at the comparatively advanced island of Fangatau, had difficulty in calculating what he ought to get for his copra. The practice at Napuka, when numbers of men were told off for community work, was for each to lay down a stone; then the stones were divided into heaps according to the assignment of groups of men to various phases of the task. As mentioned in the text, the communal fruit harvest was divided in a similar way.

Of other branches of civilized knowledge, there is relatively little notion. There is interest in geography, but only a vague idea of it. Tahiti, Hawaii, New Zealand, America, China, France, England, Germany, "the country of the white men," meaning Europe, and "the cold country," meaning the polar regions, were mentioned, but I believe the natives had but little notion of their location. They know, however, considerable about all the southeast Polynesian islands.

Automobiles, airplanes and radio are known to them by hear say, though not by experience, and they showed surprising perception when we answered their questions about these things.

They have, of course, a great deal of weather lore and other native wisdom suitable to their environment, and a practical knowledge of primitive medicine

exists among the tahunga or learned men and women of the islands.

APPENDIX III

Note on Tuamotuan Literature

ANCIENT CHANTS, transmitted orally, formerly embodied the learning and literature of the Tuamotuans. These chants were their textbooks in history, in geography, in every science they knew. The Chant of the Road of the Winds, which we heard at Fangatau, was, for example, their pilot book, their chart of the Pacific. Other compositions enumerated the birds, the known islands and their ruling chiefs, and a vast fund of other information.

Much of this lore is retained now only by a few elders, as are the sacred chants that embody the native cosmogony: how the universe was created and governed by the gods. As the individual human being is conceived and developed in the darkness of the womb, so the universe and all within it were conceived and evolved in the vast darkness of space. The Root or Source, sleeping upon his face at the center of the Darkness, turned and arose, chanting a chant through which, by effort of will, he created all things and set the various subordinate gods in command of the several spheres or planes.

Another class of chants, also sacred, remains somewhat better known, especially at such isolated places as Napuka, where it still performs a practical function. These are compositions addressed to the spirits of the ancestors, by whose aid alone the turtle, highly esteemed food animal, is obtained.

Other chants are believed to console the spirits of departed relatives, or of living dear ones in distant lands, and actually serve the purpose of comforting those who chant them. One of these chants, heard in Kararo's house at Napuka, revealed a curious belief in the existence of a "ghost-bird," a fabulous invisible creature out of the Great Darkness, whose voice, heard at night, is a harbinger of good or ill: if heard from the south, it may mean either; if from the north, the omen is an unfavorable one, generally death.

The particular chant was described by our native friends as "*na te makui i heva i te tamariki*," that is, the mourning of a parent for a child. Its text, as taken down from the slow, monotonous intonation of Kararo and his relatives, follows.

Opening:

E ringoringo ki tonga ra te ringoringo.

Refrain:

E ringoringo mate,
e ringoringo ora hoki,
ho mai aro ia e!

I

E ringoringo mate e,
koa ka hare mai,
koa ka hare mai tonga.
Kua puni te ata motu henua
i te kimihanga i taku nei tama hoi
i te ringoringo.
(Repeat refrain.)

II

E ringoringo mate, e naki,
nakinaki ra o a tangata,
ka i he (iho?) koe ki to te atua ra tonga hoki
te ringoringo.
(Repeat refrain.)

The language is archaic, and difficult of translation. Questioned as to specific words in some of these chants, the elders replied: "The chants are not for us; they are for the spirits. It does not matter whether we know what they mean. The spirits know." My scientific companion Emory, to whom I am indebted for much aid in the study of the language, will not wish to be held responsible for the tentative rendering which I have evolved less as a literal translation than as an attempt to convey some thing of the spirit of the chant:

Ghost-bird of the south, the ghost-bird!
Is it the bird of death,
or the bird of life indeed?
Give courage (in this hour of wondering)!

O bird of death,
let joy come!
let joy come from the south!
The island is hidden in cloud
in the search for my child,
by the ghost-bird.

The remainder is more obscure. The sense seems to be that the ghost-bird, embodying the essence of a god, brings close to the living the shadowy, spirit-haunted world of the Darkness. In another chant of this class, (called *fangu*) the ghost-bird is called upon to fly to a distant land whither a friend of the chanter has gone - presumably to carry a message of love and consolation and bring back a similar comfort.

Another kind of chant, called *koivi*, revealed an approach to a definite rhythmic pattern. The best example in my notes is one enumerating pastimes:

Tera, tera hoki, i te taetae rekareka,
ta Rangatiti ko te pei, ko te hoperepere.

Tera, tera hoki i te taetae rekareka,
ta Ngane-te-huru hoki, ko te huka.

Tera tera hoki i te taetae rekareka,
ta Teroro-ma, ko te uru ia mauono.

Taku arofa.

Approximate translation:

There, go there, to the pleasant sport,
belonging to Rangatiti, the juggling,
the game of throwing.

There, there indeed, to the pleasant sport
belonging to Ngane-te-huru,
the sport of surfing.

There, there indeed, to the pleasant pastime
belonging to Teroro and her associates,
the twining of ear wreaths of fragrant fern-

My love!

An interesting class of compositions is the *fakatara* (apparently literally "sharpener"), a patriotic eulogy. One of the finest of these has been quoted in the text. Another delves back into mythological history, referring to Hina, who discovered the islands of the known world, and to the white terns (*taketake*) which occur in many of these poems. The reference may mean that the discoverers found the islands by following the white terns, as mariners to this day locate land by observing the flight of sea birds returning from fishing:

Tei fakatara atu ra vau i te ingoa o taku henua ra,
Tepuka-runga, Tepuka-raro,
titau ki te nuku o Hina.
Ka taka huri hanga taketake
e katau kirunga o Pukarua.

Approximate translation:

I chant the praise of the name of my country:
Tepuka of the east, Tepuka of the west
[Tepuka and Tepoto]
sought by the fleet of Hina.
Let the white terns wheel

and alight upon the two lands of the puka trees!

The young people have evolved, or adapted from Tahiti, a popular song literature, the *ute*. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of these could be collected. One of those heard at Napuka was:

Haere 'tu na vau i te pae pape,
e haru rii au i te vahine.
Hihiu ae nei te vahine iaku,
ua horo i te utu a fare.
Matau to oe i taku rima tamau,
tei rave iaku a taku vahine.

Approximate translation:

I go to the side of the water
and seize upon a girl.
She slips out of my grasp
and hides beneath the thatch of a house.
When she becomes accustomed to my hand,
I shall take my sweetheart.

Another Napuka favorite (rendered from memory):

Ahuru ma piti i te po e
patoutou a vau ki te opani to fare.
Kiri ti, a kiri ti i te opani to fare!

Ahuru ma piti i te po e
ia patoutou oe i te opani o taku fare,
kiriti, kiriti vau i te opani o taku fare.

Approximate translation:

At midnight
I knock at the door of your house:
open, open the door of your house!

At midnight,
if you knocked at the door of my house,
I would open it!

A further musical development is the *himene*, from English "hymn," of which the musical style, like the word, probably derives in part at least from European music. The *himene* commonly sung in what appear to be parts, has a rudimentary melody, sometimes vaguely recognizable as to its source, but colored and modified by native influences. An example, composed by Tuata and Hei while we were there, was a *himene* to be sung at the return of Chief Maono:

E Maono tavana e, te reva ana koe;
hopere mai koe, to hanga tamariki e;
kaore makui e, kirunga i te henua e!

Engere hopere ai, no tetahi tumu ke atu e,
kia tae koe, ki Tahiti,
kia haavahia e korua e!

I ko nei matou e, heva tika atu ae,
akore ravea e, kua ta tatou e.

Kia hoki mai koe kirunga i te henua e,
kia kite atu matou, koa iho nei matou:
tei koa hoki, kua tae mai koe!

Approximate translation (which fails to capture the deep feeling and filial spirit of the original):

Maono, (our) chief, you go,
casting aside your children
[*i.e.*, the people of the island].
There is no father on the land.
You will not cast us off, for any reason,
when you have arrived at Tahiti
and when you two have been judged.
Here we stand weeping;
nothing avails us.
When you return upon the land,
when we see you, there shall be joy for us-
joy, in your return.

Scholars have named and described many more classes of native music, but these were the principal ones that we heard. The more inquiring reader is recommended to E. G. Burrows' study of *Native Music of the Tuamotu*, a publication of the Bishop Museum; and for the ancient sacred chants, to other publications of the same institution, notably *Maui and Tahaki*, by J. Frank Stimson.

APPENDIX IV

Whence the Polynesians?

WHEN THE QUESTION was asked of the Hawaiians, "Whence do you come?" they replied: "*Mai ka Po mai, mai lewa mai*, makou - from the Darkness we come, from the moving space." That appears to have been a cosmological, rather than a historical answer - predicated upon belief in creation of the visible world out of the Cosmic Night.

But among many of the Polynesian peoples there is a more specific notion of the origin - as the Hawaiians had, too, in their ancestral chants, in which the geographical names can be unidentified only vaguely now. In many Polynesian countries, the place of that origin is called, in one form or another of the name, Havaiki. It is a name that survives confusingly in application to a score or more of present geographical places: Hawaii in the north, Savaii in the west, the old name of Raiatea in the Society archipelago, of Fakarava in the Tuamotu, and many others. For the Polynesians, in their migrations, carried their place-names with them, as the English colonists in America carried Plymouth, Bedford, York with them to their New World.

In the course of centuries the memory has become blurred. My Tuamotuan friends confuse the ancestral geographical Havaiki, which in all probability was an actual terrestrial place, with the Po, the primeval darkness from which the world was born.

But the historical tradition has not been everywhere lost, even in the Tuamotu. A very ancient chant survives, which is evidently a record of voyages, a primitive geography:

"The land Havaiki grew up, with its chief Rongo-nui; then Vavau, with its chief Toiane. Then appeared the land Hitinui, its king Tangaroa-manahune...."

And so on, till the record begins to name islands definitely known today: Tahiti, Meetia, and the islands of the Tuamotu from west to east.

Other Polynesian peoples have longer chants, naming more countries, and more chiefs, beginning, like this one, with lands not now known by those names, and proceeding to islands that can be more readily identified.

The clue is in the names of the chiefs who ruled when the lands named, in their succession, were occupied, or, as the chants say, "grew up" or were "fished up" from the Pacific - a poetic figure for the apparent rising of a land as it is sighted and approached by sea.

For the most numerous and inviolate chants are genealogies records kept orally, by which descent is still traced and land rights confirmed. If the kinship of all the Polynesian peoples were not definitely obvious from the

mass of other evidence, it would still appear in the coincidence of the early sequences of these genealogies from widely separated countries. Far enough back, most of them name the same ancestors.

Hence it is possible, by counting a given number of years to a generation, to arrive at the approximate date when the chiefs named in the chants ruled, and therefore the approximate date when the Polynesians were in occupation of the lands named in the chants. In other words, it is possible from this evidence to construct a rough history of Polynesia.

This still does not tell us where "Havaiki" was. But there is at least one native tradition that comes very near to placing it geographically in the world we know today. And it is highly significant that that tradition agrees with the weight of modern scientific opinion based on a great deal of ocher evidence. Scientists naturally are not in universal agreement. But most of them say the evidence points to the origin of the Polynesians in south eastern Asia, or more specifically, somewhere in what is known today as India.

Many corpulent volumes have been written on this subject, heavily sprinkled with scientific terminology and long native names. Such scholars as S. Percy Smith, William Churchill, Judge Abraham Fornander and others spent the greater share of their lives tracing the story.

And it was the indefatigable Percy Smith who obtained from a Maori chief in New Zealand the fullest account of that mysterious ancestral country whence came the many peoples classed as Polynesian - including my friends in the Cloud of Islands.

A good deal of other evidence, gathered by more students than can be named in this brief sketch, supports his theory. By a patient study and comparison of genealogies from different islands, Smith and others, allowing generally twenty-five years to a generation, have constructed a Polynesian chronology in terms of the calendar of today's world.

About 475 B.C., then, the ancestors of the Polynesians were living in a large country (*tua-whenua*, the Maori chief describes it), a "backbone of land," far to the west of all the present Polynesian habitations. The name of this land was Hawaiki (Maori form of my Tuamotuan friends' Havaiki), and another name for it, or for the larger country of which it was a part, was Atia, which is also the Maori pronunciation of "Asia." Havaiki was a broad, level country, bounded inland by snow topped mountains, and through it flowed a great river called Tohinga, a name which is translated as "Cleansing by Immersion."

The description certainly suggests India; the mountains the Himalaya, and the river the Ganges, where Hindus still bathe to cleanse themselves of sins.

In that country a chief named Tu-te-rangi-marama (He Who Stands, the Illumined Sky) built a temple twelve fathoms high, surrounded by a stone wall, as a meeting place for gods and men. This temple, called Korotuatini, Place of Many Enclosures, was *ngai tapu kaka*, a sacred, glorious place, where dances, games and music originated. This temple was also called

Hawaiki-nui, Great Hawaiki. From the description, it seems to have resembled the *heiau* of the Hawaiians and the *marae* of the Tahitians, an enclosure containing several ceremonial courts.

One of the most interesting details supplied by Maori lore is that the full name of the country was Atia-nui-te-varinga, which, from evidence too intricate and voluminous to be quoted here, has been interpreted as "Great Asia Supplied with Rice." This is confirmed further by a Rarotongan account of the food of their ancestral country as "*vari*," the name still applied in the related dialect of the Malagasy (a people of Malayan and Polynesian connections who migrated to the African island of Madagascar). Another name of the country was Irihia, possibly a variant of Vrihia, used in the Rig-Veda to designate a part of India.

It should be mentioned here that Judge Fornander identifies Havaiki with Saba, in southeastern Arabia, that an ancient name for India is Sind-Hava, the Moon-Land, that Hina or Sina is a Polynesian moon-goddess and Hava the apparent root-form of Havaiki (Hava-iki, Little Hava, or possibly Hava-ariki, Royal Hava).

Bordering Havaiki or Irihia on the northwest was a country called Uru, which some scholars identify tentatively as "Ur of the Chaldees." It was a country of five tribes, two of whom were slender, "like branches of trees," and the three others "black." A "blond" people of uncertain origin is also mentioned.

The peoples of Uru pressed in upon Havaiki, and there were wars for a century or more, doubtless a series of border raids, with intervals of comparative peace, in which marriages took place between chiefs of the Havaiki and Uru peoples.

Probably the Uru tribes themselves were being driven on by pressure of other peoples from behind. At any rate, the Havaiki tribes were gradually driven out - probably not all at once, but clan by clan, as their chiefs, wearied with harrying, sought lands where they might have peace.

Their way was eastward. Eventually we find them at Kuranui, the Great Red Land, which bordered on the sea. The pressure continued; the tales are of battles: "fifty chiefs fell." At least one group of Havaiki people, pressed down to the limit of the land, committed themselves to the sea, taking with them enslaved captives from the enemy tribes. Seven canoes were built, in which they sailed to Tawhiti-roa (Long Tahiti, or the Long Land of the Rising Sun), which has been identified tentatively as Sumatra in the East Indies. Naming their settlement there Irihia, after the homeland in the west, they remained many generations. But they still had not found peace.

For the Rising Sun Land was already inhabited by a people described as "lean, lanky, and black." They quarreled over the fishing rights; in one war five hundred chiefs perished. From study of the genealogies, this war occurred about 65 B.C.

The black people were too many. Explorers went forth, in sewn ships like

the great fast-sailing *pahi* of the Tuamotuans. New lands were found, always to the east. "Following the direction of The One Who Came Back from There," seven canoes colonized a country these people called Tawhiti-nui, the Great Rising-Sun Land. It is an odd, warming sort of pleasure to recognize, in the name of one of these canoes, the same name as the canoe of Chief Maono, in which I voyaged across the lagoon of Tepuka Maruia - the canoe called Marama, the Light!

Tawhiti-roa (Sumatra) was a hot country. So they sailed north east with the wind and to escape the heat. Arriving at Tawhiti-nui (identified tentatively as Borneo), they entered a river on the southwest coast (probably the Kapoeas) and followed it far inland, where they made cave dwellings for defense. Later as they became more numerous, they built fortified towns the open, like the pa of the New Zealand Maori.

This Tawhiti-nui is described as eleven days sailing from "Irihia."

At about the same time as the fighting in Sumatra, the chief Te Kura-a-moo and his people migrated to a country call in he legends (H)Avaiki-te-variga, identied tentatively as Java. A chief of this period discovered the breadfruit, and his wife the Polynesian chestnut. Another voyager introduced another new food, described as "a fragrant white yam," and these foods took the place of rice.

Wars and explorations continued. Group by group the ancestors of the Polynesians drifted eastward, carrying with them groups of enslaved captives, whose blood in course of time became mingled with theirs. By 450 A.D. they were in Fiji[1] and at about that time seems to have been made one of the longest migratory voyages in history. For the tale relates that Irapanga (probably the same known to Hawaiians as Hawaii-loa) sailed northeast from Tawhiti-nui (Borneo?) to (O)Ahu in the Hawaiian Islands, a distance of some six thousand miles, which, according to Hawaiian accounts, he covered in "seven changes of the moon." This is of course quite possible, in the swift-sailing ships of the Polynesian voyagers; one of the canoes in the later migration from the Society Islands to New Zealand averaged 145 miles a day. The trip undoubtedly was broken by intervening islands; the longest jump would have been from the Ralik chain to Oahu, about 2,100 miles. At this time also is the first mention in the chants of Samoa.

It is supposed that this voyager, after discovering the Hawaiian Islands, went back and brought his people to settle them. Mean while his related clans spread through Fiji and Tonga, not without warfare among themselves, and occupied Samoa.

This was a period of voyaging and discovering. About 650 A.D., Ui-te-rangiora sailed from Fiji into the cold sea beyond Rapa, i.e., the Antarctic, and brought back marvelous tales of the sea that was like scraped arrowroot (with ice); of mermaids whose hair (kelp?) waved in the waters, "the deceitful animal of that sea who dives to great depths" (walrus or sea lion?) and icebergs "like rocks piercing the sky, and there is no thing growing upon

them."

More than a hundred lands are listed in the chants as having been visited by the navigators of that period, many of which cannot be identified today, but in general including probably most of the central Pacific and some outlying islands. Some doubled back; Tonga and Fiji chiefs invaded New Caledonia, where some chiefs still claim descent from them, and probably colonized temporarily many islands such as the New Hebrides. There are references to a country in the west - possibly New Guinea whither expeditions went for the precious feathers of a crimson bird. They also maintained communication with their earlier homelands in the East Indies (where doubtless some of their people had remained) up to about the middle of the thirteenth century, when the piratical, warlike Malays, after some centuries of crowding in, had made those seas too unsafe and had over whelmed the remaining Polynesian colonies in those countries, vestiges of which here and there remain.

As the causes of the original migration were war and pressure from invaders, so the later migrations often arose from similar causes. In the East Indies, as we have seen, they found tribes already in possession; farther cast it is not certain whether the lands were empty when they arrived, but scientific opinion leans to the hypothesis that they were. However, as population grew, some of these islands became crowded; disputes arose; there was tribal warfare, and defeated clans took up the trek again over the sea. Dr. Peter Te Rangi Hiroa Buck, the distinguished Maori who heads the Bishop Museum, has explained these and other reasons for the continued voyaging. In part it seems to have proceeded from an adventurous curiosity, in par from economic causes, and in part from the jealousies of chiefs. As Dr. Buck explains, sometimes a priest would report a vision given him by the gods, of a fruitful land to the east or north or south. A defeated chief, or an ambitious younger son, would gather his warriors and kinsfolk together and embark. The canoes, according to old accounts, deployed in a wide crescent formation, each one just within sight of the next (about five miles apart) and thus they combed the sea. Bruce Cartwright says there were usually four double canoes in a fleet; thus they traced a track fifteen miles wide. They navigate by the stars, known winds and sea currents, and detected the presence of land by the flight of sea birds, the color and drift of water, and other signs known to their descendants today. Some even had charts of sticks, strings and shells. Their provisions were long-keeping yams, breadfruit paste, coconuts and the like, with water in bamboo tubes. Over shoals and in the vicinity of islands they replenished these supplies with fresh fish, and caught rainwater in ocean squalls. Cartwright and others believe they were led to Hawaii, for example, by the golden plover, a migratory bird which flies in the fall from Alaska to Hawaii and thence to islands south and returns in the spring.

So for one reason or another, the Polynesians kept moving. They probably occupied the Marquesas about 675 A.D., genealogies indicate that the island now known as Tahiti was occupied by them, though probably not for the first

time, in 850, Rarotonga a generation later. In 925 the voyager Kupe discovered New Zealand; fifty years later the first Polynesian colonists occupied part of that country. About 1000 A.D. our voyagers were driving into the Tuamotu, probably progressing gradually eastward. At about the middle of that century there was a Samoan movement into Tonga, and various voyages are mentioned. The colonization of the Tuamotu probably proceeded slowly, largely from west to east, and relatively late, since the low islands are regarded as less desirable than the high, being in general smaller, less fertile and subject to disastrous hurricanes. They must have been at first refuges, rather than homes. Some scientists think the high islands surrounding the Tuamotu were occupied first, and that these bits of coral and sand received mainly fugitives and strays, losers in war or survivors from shipwrecks and canoe parties driven out of their courses. M. Herve, administrator of the Tuamotu, says the islands received their population largely during the wars in Tahiti in the twelfth century A.D.

These theories seem to be borne out by the statements of the Tepuka people as to the origin of the ancestors of their four clans: one from Tahiti, one from the Marquesas, one from the eastern Pukapuka before mentioned, and one from a land no longer identified.

Rapa, in the south, was colonized, according to native tradition which unfortunately lacks corroboration at the other end of the purported voyage, from New Zealand. Easter Island, anciently called Te Pito Henua, Navel of the Earth, and now known in those seas as Rapa-nui, Great Rapa, is said to have been colonized from Rapa. It is possible that there was more than one migration to each of these places, for there are accounts of battles between invaders and earlier occupants. On Easter Island the "long-eared" and the "short-eared" people fought.

Among other places, the Polynesians colonized Pitcairn Island long before its discovery or its occupation by the mutineers of the *Bounty*, though these Polynesian pioneers had by that time left it untenanted. The ancient name of the island is said to have been Hiti-au-rereva, rendered by Teuira Henry "Border of Passing Clouds." The same authority tells of an island that once stood north-northeast of Pitcairn, roughly in the vicinity of the five Minerva islets marked on old charts of the Tuamotu, but not now to be found. The Tahitian and Tuamotuan legends of the voyages of Rata give a graphic description of the submergence of this land, which was called Hiti-marama, Border or Rising of the Light, or of the Moon.

Hiti-marama is described as a high island surrounded by a reef within which was a broad lagoon. In the center of the island was a single conical mountain, white with blossoms of the aeho grass which was such a vexation to members of our party in the Isles-Under-the-Wind. Below was a cavern extending downward to the Great Darkness. The Tahitian hero Rata voyaged to Hiti-marama to rescue his mother, who was a prisoner in that demon-guarded land. Putting the inhabitants to sleep by magic spells, Rata carried her

off, and as they left the harbor, "wind and sea rose fiercely over that island, which soon sank forever, even the mountain, into unknown depths."

The trouble with this story is that Rata occupies a place in the genealogies earlier than the Tuamotu are supposed to have been inhabited being of the period when the ancestors of the peoples of several countries merge. In Hawaii, for instance, he is definitely mentioned (Hawaiian form of the name, Laka) as having been born at Haili, Island of Hawaii, died at Kualoa, Oahu and been buried in Iao valley, Maui. His identity is unmistakable, for the names of his father and grandfather coincide in the several genealogies. Evidently he lived before the last major dispersion. Smith places him in the eighth century A.D., provisionally in Fiji or Samoa, as a champion in wars against the Melanesians and one whose exploits have been localized by his descendants in the various islands.

This hypothesis suggests that Hiti-marama may not have been in the Tuamotu at all, but perhaps some such place as Falcon Island, in the Tonga archipelago, which even yet is rising and sinking with volcanic activity.

These circumstances, however, do not necessarily invalidate all the story. The Polynesian settlement of Pitcairn at an early date, for instance, was confirmed by relics found there by the *Bounty* mutineers. The discrepancies merely illustrate the difficulty of reconstructing Polynesian history in European terms of time. It may be remarked in passing that a high and comparatively fruitful island such as Pitcairn or the fabled Hiti marama may well have been colonized earlier than the less hospitable low islands.

Another fact to be borne in mind constantly in interpreting Polynesian legendry is that place names may refer to islands in the early history of the race which no longer bear these names, and that the islands which now bear them derive the names from their forgotten predecessors in the long march of the generations.

But in the course of time all these islands were taken over save some of the less inhabitable of the Tuamotu which are still vacant today.

The twelfth century saw another active period of voyaging, in which the Society Islands seem to have been the center of dispersion. Probably the main cause was the growth of population which sent the dispossessed or the venturously ambitious forth to seek new lands. Early in that century contact seems to have been re-established with Hawaii, in the north, and about 1150 began a series of voyages back and forth between the Society Islands and the Hawaiian Islands, in which a race of chiefs from Tahiti and. neighboring islands became the ruling families of most of the islands of Hawaii.

Tradition does not say much of battles in this invasion but whether peacefully or otherwise, the chiefs from the south took over the land so thoroughly that their predecessors, the progeny of Irapanga-Hawaiiloa, became in the later Hawaiian and a semi-mythical people, like the "Little People" of Ireland - unless indeed, this fabled race of *menehune* were a pre-Polynesian people who occupied the land even before Hawaii-loa. My own

scientific friends believe the *menehune* were Hawaii loa's tribe, the original migrants from the East Indies to Hawaii.

By that time, practically all of the Polynesian countries had been settled, at least by their pioneer inhabitants. About 1175 A.D., the Moriori, probably under pressure of related tribes or perhaps of invaders from the north, fled from New Zealand to the Chatham Islands. About 1250 there was a second settlement of Rarotonga, and about 1300 a back-track thither from New Zealand. Between 1250 and 1325 there was a series of voyages to New Zealand, probably from the center of dispersal in the Society Islands, which seem to have been crowded at that time. In the first half of the fourteenth century came the great descent on New Zealand, "Land of the Long White Cloud," by the "fleet" of canoes whose names, and the names of their captains and crews, even the names of their paddles, are preserved in chanted tradition.

The impression in some quarters that the New Zealand Maori came from the islands now known as Hawaii, probably arose from a confusion of names. Though such a voyage is by no means impossible, it seems more likely that they came from the island of Raiatea in the Society archipelago, the ancient name of which was Havaiki or Havaii.

About this time, the voyages between the present Hawaiian Islands and the southern groups ceased, and the dispersal point was gradually forgotten by the people who had come from there, so that Tahiti (in Hawaiian "Kahiki") came to mean in the Hawaiian language, vaguely, any foreign country.

Doubtless the pressure of population had been relieved by the outward flow from the Society Islands north, south and east. For we hear no more of extensive migrations or long voyages. The Hawaiians remained in their islands, building up the complicated feudal and religious system which was characteristic of them when Captain Cook's ships burst through the curving curtain of the sky in 1778. The Maori remained in New Zealand, adapting their ways of life to the cooler climate and different natural resources of that country, developing weaving from flax in place of the bark-cloth of the other Polynesians, and elaborately carved wooden house-frames in place of the comparatively frail thatched habitations of grass, coconut leaves, bamboo, etc., which sufficed for the more tropical islanders.

Naturally enough, in the great eastward trek over the centuries the Polynesians left remnants of their number behind them on the island stepping-stones from India. It is believed the people of Bali are part Polynesia, and there are tales of obscure forgotten hill tribes in India itself and in the Malayan countries, who may represent Polynesian colonies somewhat overlaid with other racial elements. There is a series of low islands, not unlike the Tuamotu, off the larger, higher Melanesian island groups, where Polynesian languages are spoken and where the people keep the same customs and preserve much the same physical appearance as their Polynesian kindred farther east. Ongtong-Java, Rennell, Bellona, Tikopia, Sikaiana, are a few of these islands. There are tribes, ostensibly Melanesian, who speak Polynesian

dialects, showing perhaps an overwhelming of small Polynesian colonies by Melanesian hordes and the handing down of the Polynesian language by captive mothers to their mixed offspring. There are Melanesian and Papuan tales of red-haired chiefs who landed on their shores, introducing fragments of higher culture, and whose ghosts are revered among them today as gods. The Micronesian archipelagos to the north of the equator in the western Pacific retain many Polynesian words and customs, mingled with those of Malay, Japanese and more obscure racial elements.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the Polynesians like most so-called races, are a mixed people, and that probably they were a mixed people even before they left India, or Arabia or as Macmillan Brown thinks, a more northerly place in Asia.

In the fifth century B.C., when He-who-stands-in-the-lighted sky was building his temple in the Great Land of Rice and fighting and marrying with the Urn people from the northwest, it seems they were already a rather dark people, for the traditions speak of neighboring races both darker and lighter than they, with whom they undoubtedly mingled. Whether it entered at that time or later, or was there from the beginning, it appears that there has been from a very early period a "blond" strain in the Polynesians, characterized by ruddy hair, an olive complexion and features described, for want of a better term as "Caucasian." This strain survives in practically all the Polynesian countries, and is particularly evident in our own island Tepuka Maruia, which has had less contact with foreigners than most. The earliest known European voyagers in the Pacific were impressed by it: Wallis in Tahiti, the Spaniards in the Marquesas and western Tuamotu and at Gente Hermosa, now known as Swain's Island, in Samoa.

It is believed that African and Arabian traders were in India before the Aryan invasion, and that pre-Aryan India was partly Egyptian. Phoenicians or Greeks are thought to have visited Sumatra about the time the Polynesians were there, and Maori tradition records the learning of the making of nets from a white people. Hawaii-loa, in one of his early voyages, visited a large country inhabited by a light-colored, slant-eyed people, and brought two of them to his own country, probably in the East Indies.

At least one scholar, Dr. E. S. C. Handy of the Bishop Museum, has attempted to show a more considerable Chinese strain in the Polynesian people, derived from a relatively late incursion of a South China river people.

There are evidences also of some contact with the Malay sea-rovers who seem to have begun penetrating the East Indies in about the first century. It has been mentioned that the Polynesians, as they moved, took with them enslaved captives taken from the various peoples with whom they fought, and in the course of generations of residence in various islands occupied in part by non-Polynesian races, considerable intermarriage and woman-stealing must have gone on. Polynesian hospitality being what it is, such distinguished visitors as the Greek or Phoenician "white gods who lived on the sea," must

have had their part in the making of the race as it is today.

So we have a combination of ancient Indic, southeast Asiatic, historic Hindu, Chinese, Melanesian and Papuan elements, all of which seem to have contributed to the culture of the island people. Nor was the mixture, according to some authorities, complete even with this. Handy traces an American influence, derived from putative contact established by Polynesian voyagers in Mexico and Peru, with possibly, according to other students, some stray drifts of American canoes into Polynesia.

The proportion of these various elements varied in different migratory groups; hence the physical and linguistic differences from island to island. The settlers at Reao, in the easternmost Tuamotu, for instance, seem to have had in their number an unusually large element of the supposed slave population, accounting for their rather marked physical differences from other Polynesians. Many of them resemble, to the casual non-scientific eye, the Malayan tribes of the Philippines; others show possible Melanesian or Papuan traits. We noted at Fangatau, in the mid east Tuamotu, a tall, rangy type with features suggesting certain tribes of American Indians.

Our own immediate Two Lands of the Puka Trees, in the northernmost eastern Tuamotu, seem to have been among the latest occupied. The Tahitian hero Hono(k) ura, ascribed by Smith to about 11oo A.D., visited these islands, according to Tahitian tradition preserved by J.M. Orsmond and recorded by Teuira Henry. The tale distinctly relates that Honokura found Tepuka and Tepoto unoccupied, when he landed there to rest his warriors and replenish his supplies after a raid of vengeance on the western Tuamotu. It was there that a battle as fought, in which by stratagem Honokura overcame the west Tuamotuan war parties.

So it must have been after 1100 A.D. when the "first ances tor" of the Tepukans, the daughter of the gods, Maruia, ar nved there and, as the chant says, "established the foundations of the settlement." Nothing seems to be known of Maruia's origin save that she was "born of the Sea-that-Moans and of the Bones of Chiefs," and that she came from Mahina-te-Tahora, an island east of Tepuka some hundreds of miles, now uninhabited and known variously as Honden, Heruake, Dog Island, and Pukapuka-but not to be confused with any of the other islands also named Pukapuka, farther west.

As that island also is a low coral atoll, small and limited in resources, it is likely that Maruia or her ancestors came there from a larger, higher island, probably one of the Marquesas whence they were driven by war.

We know a little more about some of Maruia's immediate descendants. One of them, Huarei, is said to have been born of Maruia and the gods of the Darkness, and to have been the most beautiful woman in the known world. As related hitherto she became the wife of the warrior chief and voyager Moeava (about 1400 A.D.) from the islands farther south and west Takaroa and Hao, and ruled over Pukapuka, Tepuka and Tepoto. Their son Kehauri became a famous chief.

Probably Maruia represents a family group driven out of the Marquesas or Tahiti in the overcrowding that caused the period of voyaging that began in the twelfth century. There is nothing in the tradition to indicate why she left Pukapuka; if the tale is correct in saying that her descendants continued to rule that island, she could hardly have been expelled by invaders. Perhaps a Jean season caused the migration; perhaps mere adventurousness.

At any rate, Maruia's people occupied the island that bears her name, and still do. At slightly later periods others arrived, and as there is no record of conflict, it would seem none of the clans were very numerous and there was room for all. Possibly the numbers were so nearly equal that neither side cared to risk a battle. Or perhaps they did fight at first, and then made peace. All we could learn from the oldest living inhabitant was that "the people were not warlike. The spears were for fish."

Fish and shellfish being abundant, and the pandanus tree fruitful, they thrived there, if not as luxuriously as in the more fer tile and varied environment of the high islands, at least tolerably well.

In the genealogy given me by Tehau and Teroro-tu on the occasion of my "adoption," the first name is that of Tanu-ariki, who came from Tahiti. Native history again is silent as to why he came, again probably because he was defeated in war, or found for other reasons that there was no room for him there. From Tanu-ariki to Teroro-tu, living today, there are recorded thirteen generations. Allowing twenty-five years to a generation, Tanu-ariki apparently did not arrive at Tepuka until early in the seventeenth century, or about the time of the Spanish voyages.

The great-grandson of Tanu-ariki, presumably living in the early eighteenth century, was Mokio-ariki, as far as we could learn the last ancestor who is particularly noted for heroic exploits. As related hitherto, he descended into the Great Dark ness to rescue his wife Fangu-taku-ariki, and there learned dances and chants which he taught to the people. Stripping this title of its supernatural elements and rationalizing from them, it appears that Mokio-ariki, in addition to being a chief, was a bard and composer who put into form the art expression of his people. As to his journey into the spirit-world, probably Fangu was unconscious for some time-exaggerated in the legend-and her eventual recovery under his care was interpreted in those mythological-poetic terms.

The story, it may be added, is obviously one much older than the human history of the island. It is found in more elaborate form in Hawaii and elsewhere in Polynesia, as well as in classic Greece. So it may well be that, as often happens, an ancient myth became associated with a more recent historical character.

Mokio-ariki's grandchildren must have been living when John Byron, repulsed by spears, sailed away from the two islands, naming them "Isles of Disappointment." This is the first recorded contact with Europeans (1765), though it is possible, as some writers point out, that pirates had visited and

terrified some of the Tuamotu with acts of ignorant barbarism before this time.

Korokoa, whom Wilkes, the next recorded white visitor, names as the chief of Tepuka in 1839, is not mentioned in any genealogy I saw or heard. Doubtless Wilkes' Maori interpreter bungled this job as he did the names of the islands.

The French colonial government, according to the administrator at the time of our visit, took over the Tuamotu about the middle of the nineteenth century, probably extending active control rather gradually from west to east. The granddaughter of the last independent chief of Tepuka was living near us on the island - an ordinary enough young woman, and our friend Paunu is the son of the first local "governor" under the French administration.

The people of Tepuka and Tepoto appear to have descended from the earlier wave of Polynesian migration. The evidence of this is in their physical appearance, language and customs: the structure of their sacred places and the simplicity of their social organization. Their culture evidently stems from the same period in Polynesian history as that which Hawaii-loa's supposed fifth century migration took to Hawaii. Probably their ancestors were people of that migration, driven out of the more westerly countries by the later immigrants.

As we were discussing, in our house on the island, the fabled *menehune*, identified with the early inhabitants of Hawaii, Emory, glancing around the room at our Tepuka neighbors, remarked: "These are the *menehune*."

Indeed, their lower stature, compared with many other Polynesians, and their compact though powerful build, suggest the physical differences exaggerated by Hawaiian legend into tales of a race of "dwarfs." Their language, too, as noted in the section on that subject, contains elements that may be referred to an earlier period than the present Tahitian, besides a number of puzzling words that may be non-Polynesian. Some of these may be merely localisms; others may have been derived from the slave element of early migratory times, or from one or an other of the influences with which they came into contact.

Emory has pointed out that their marae or sacred enclosures are practically identical with those on the small islands Necker and Nihoa of the Hawaiian archipelago, which are attributed to the Hawaiians of the fifth century migration. They also seem to have been free from the excessively complicated system of tabu and the sharply defined class system which prevailed in Tahiti and in Hawaii after the twelfth century Tahitian invasion. Hence the Tepuka people may be regarded as representing to some extent the Ur-Polynesian, the already somewhat mixed people that moved eastward from the East Indies in the fifth century, before later contacts had modified and complicated the remainder of their tribes who were to follow. Likely enough their ancestors were driven out of Tahiti or other dispersal centers by later coming migrants, also Polynesians, but of a slightly different stock.

Though the migrations are not to be thought of as single mass movements

of large bodies of people, but rather as scattered flights of a family or a few families or groups at a time, two or more major migrations are distinguished by students of the problem. Smith postulates three: one of which is represented by the Samoans, Tongans and scattered lesser groups; another by Rarotongans, Tahitians, Tuamotuans, Marquesans, Mangarevans and most of the New Zealand Maori, and a third including the East Coast Maori and many Hawaiians.

Churchill postulates two great migrations, which he calls the Proto-Samoan and the Tongafiti, the latter ending about 1200 A.D. These two branches of the race fought in some central dispersal point, Samoa, Tonga or Fiji, and the Tongafiti people were expelled to Hawaii and New Zealand.

Macmillan Brown sets the migrations farther back in time and farther apart, and attempts to derive one element of the Polynesians from a northern source. He believes an old-stone-age "Aryan" people, crowded out of Asia by the ice age, entered the Pacific, in a time when the land masses were greater than now (the ice cap having imprisoned moisture and lowered the sea level), through Japan and Micronesia into Polynesia as far as Easter Island. He places this drift from the north at about one hundred thousand years ago, and supports it by the wide spread references to the ancestral homeland as a cold" country of "long darkness," and by much cultural data too complicated to be summarized here.

Brown holds that these pioneers were followed by two movements of new-stone-age people, one a fair "Mediterranean" race and the other a South Asiatic tribe, both voyaging by canoe, by way of the East Indies and the Melanesian and Papuan countries, and both before the Christian era.

In any case, the Polynesians seem most likely to have originated in Asia, and to have migrated in two or more waves, over a period of centuries, into the Pacific islands, spreading out from one or more long-occupied places in the Pacific to the various islands where they now dwell.

Hence our Tuamotuan friends have a long though uncertain history behind them. Many fascinating surmises are possible: perhaps Maono, present chief of Tepuka, derives his name and ancestry from that Maono who was the elder brother of Tangiia and a chief in Tahiti in the twelfth century. That Maono was driven out by his rebellious younger brother, who was later killed at Takume in the Tuamotu by a chief from the Marquesas. The old name, Tepuka-maru, of the island of Takume, farther west, suggests Tepuka Maruia, and the ancestral name Tangiia, with an "h" inserted between the two i's, survives today at Tepuka.

The findings regarding the origin and general movement of the Polynesians, though perhaps not completely established, may be regarded at least as highly probable. As my scientific acquaintances put it, the evidence bearing on these problems is still being collected. The expedition of 1934, in which the experiences related in the main text of this book occurred, was one of a score or more of such surveys made by the Bishop Museum in the

gradual collection of that evidence. When the evidence, as far as it remains available, has been gathered, then patient study and scientific comparison of data from various areas may point more conclusively to the answers. There will be gaps in he evidence, and some matters probably will always remain speculative. But further research continues to modify earlier tentative conclusions. For instance, I gathered the impression that the Society Islands are now looming larger than they once did, as the dispersal area, especially for the later migrations. Until quite recently, it was commonly stated in historical works of Hawaii that the famous priest and voyager Paao came to Hawaii from Samoa, because the chant relates that his home country was "Upolu." It has been learned, however, that Uporu, of which the Hawaiian form is Upolu, is an old name for a district in the northern part of Tahiti, and this checks with other evidence that Paao was of Tahitian origin.

Similarly some of my scientific friends are inclined at present to doubt the story of Hawaii-loa, but evidence may yet be obrained to confirm it, though that evidence may place him in a later period and bring the scope of his voyage into more reasonable limits by locating him in the more easterly (Ta)hiti-nui (Great Sunrise Land) that is known today as Fiji - perhaps even in the Tahiti of today. There can be no doubt, however, that some very long voyages were made, though some of them may have been exaggerated in heroic legendary accounts. We find islands throughout a large part of the Pacific inhabited by people of the same race, speaking dialects of the same language, and with much the same customs. They must have got there some how, and we know they had the boats.

And so, driving venturously eastward, these sea gypsies out of India came to the last scattering handfuls of the land, and gave them names that ring like warriors' songs: Raroia, Fakarava and Raraka, and all the hundred names of the Drowned Islands - and, lone in the north, Tepuka and Tepoto. Their hard earth rings like metal underfoot; the sea claws at the red fringe of the land and falls back, purring - and, snarling, claws again. Yet the children of the gods of Darkness and the Sun have made these wreaths of land their home, subsisting on the sparse fruits of those lands and the richer yields of the sea that are not to be harvested without toil; and here they have made beauty blossom in dance and poetry and song. This fevered world of ours could learn something from the peace of theirs.

1Note: In the foregoing, the early Polynesian occupants of Fiji are not to be confused with the present inhabitants of the Fiji Islands, who are predominantly Melanesian with some Polynesian mixture and traces of Polynesian influence. The name "Fiji," however, is Polynesian, and can be traced back to the East Indian period, in "Siti," an old name for Java, interpreted as "the rising," *i.e.*, the east. It is probably the root form of the name Tahiti, which survives in several places; one of the Tuamotu islands is called Hiti and we visited a district of Fiti or Fitii in the Isles-under-the-Wind. F add H, S and H are interchangeable from dialect to dialect of Polynesian, and some Polynesian dialects, including that of Tepuka, pronounce "t" when followed by "i," often as "tch" or "j." Thus Hiti, Fiti, Fiji, Siti, may be regarded as all the same name.

APPENDIX V

The Future of the Islands

SUCH INNOVATIONS as the use of nails, replacing the superior native construction; the beginning of introduction of boards and corrugated iron; the beginning of use of foreign cordage and foreign tools, use of foreign clothing and articles of diet such as rice and flour; and the introduction of commerce through the copra industry, indicate that the old life may eventually be lost, in greater or less degree, as these changes create new wants which the simple native economy cannot supply.

Influx of strangers seems, at this period, unlikely. In fact, the reverse seems to be taking place-an exodus of natives to other islands which have been depopulated by disease. The most serious danger in this is that returning members may bring back disease which will depopulate these islands in turn.

It is probable that the use of foreign articles will gradually increase, unless something happens to cut the islands off from the rest of the world or the market for copra is completely destroyed. It is possible that new crops will be introduced, as papaya and squash have been introduced in recent years.

On the whole, I believe the people will not be happier for such changes. There is a value in new crops, if used directly for community subsistence and not in commerce. They could do very well without foreign tools, with the possible exception of knives. They would be much better off without the foreign foods, which are unsuited to the climate and which may, by upsetting the present balance, undermine the sturdy health of the people.

The principal deficiency, if any, in their present diet is green vegetables. We were told that they did not eat seaweed., as the Hawaiians do. They also have no root crops, such as taro, which would be more wholesome than the rice and flour they will consume if they become sufficiently prosperous. Taro could be grown, on the windward side of Tepuka, in trenches such as formerly existed in some of the Tuamotu and still exist at Reao. We were told they had tried to grow onions, without success, because the children pulled the shoots up as fast as they sprouted. It might be worth while, however, to grow onions for he children. They also lack citrus fruits, such as limes, which the eat eagerly when they can get them from a ship.

Some such changes as these might be beneficial, though their present restricted and somewhat monotonous diet seems to pro duce good results. Perhaps its apparent deficiencies are counter acted by their consumption of raw fish, particularly fish livers, as well as coconuts and papayas.

For the most part, their life, even corrupted to the extent it is, is better for

them than attempts to imitate foreign life. The best thing that could happen to these islands would be for them to be cut off completely from the outside world, forcing them to revert to the old ways while people are still living who know some of the old processes by which the natural products were used - provided this severance happened before serious foreign disease had been introduced.

When we were there, it looked as if some such saving separation might be possible. The civilized world was tottering; its economic system seemed to be falling apart from its own rottenness; and we envisioned the day when the advance guards of commerce would be withdrawn from all the outposts, as the Roman legions were withdrawn from Britain; when the last copra schooner would be tied up for good at Fareute, and the puka trees might grow again in the place of useless surplus coconuts on the islands that bear their name.

But the white man's world appears to be tougher than we thought it was. The final collapse may not come, after all, or at least be long delayed. Civilization, instead of retreating, is advancing into hitherto little known corners of the Pacific. Air transportation is mapping its roads over the ocean that Magellan and Cook, Quiros and Mendana, Rata and Ui-te-rangiora sailed. At present the iron bird of the white man alights only in the west: from Oahu to Moku Papapa, which the white men call Midway; from there to Wake and to Guam of the Chamorro people, and thence to Manila and the Orient. A Japanese line soars down into the Mandated Islands whose peoples bear traces of an even more mixed heritage than the Polynesians. Soon the flying boats will follow the golden plover's flight south from Honolulu: Kingman's Reef, Pago Pago, Suva will know them, down to New Zealand of the Maori. But the Polynesian southeast remains unflown save by the sea birds whose flight guided the brown canoemen to the wreath-shaped lands.

It may not be so for long. Almost any of these coral atolls, with large enclosed lagoons, such as Tepuka, is a potential seaplane port. They are far better fitted to the ships of the air than to those of the sea. Accurate charting, a little blasting of coral heads, and erection of signals - and you could have a chain of airports all the way from the Marquesas to Tahiti and from there south or west.

Some of these islands are almost certain to be used, sooner or later, for that purpose, as man takes more and more to the air. Most of them are far more suitable for the purpose than the sun-baked lagoonless islands of Baker, Howland and Jarvis, which the United States is taking so much trouble to develop, farther west. The Tuamotu are practically on the route from the Panama Canal to Tahiti, and they and the Marquesas to some extent command, from a viewpoint of air strategy, the western approach to the canal.

France may discover some day that she has, in these neglected, all but forgotten spots of coral, treasure greater than the pearls that used to be raised from Tuamoruan lagoons, or the fabled gold-laden galleon sunk in the lagoon

of Hiti, or the pirate hoard for which men have dug the coralline soil of Pinaki in vain. For the world's ocean highways are increasingly skyways.

Hence it is not impossible that some of these islands mar be come sites in time of resorts such as has recently been built on comparatively bleak Midway, with hotels to house wealthy air tourists, and exploitation of the fishing and bathing in the lagoons.

I should be sorry to see that happen. It would mean the end of the Tepuka and Tepoto we have known, and probably the end of that simple, friendly people.

But there are many islands in the Tuamotu, and most of them have lagoons. Two or three airports in all the group would be enough. So perhaps the airway builders will overlook the Puka Tree islands, and those people can go on in their own way for a long time yet. I hope so.

PAU